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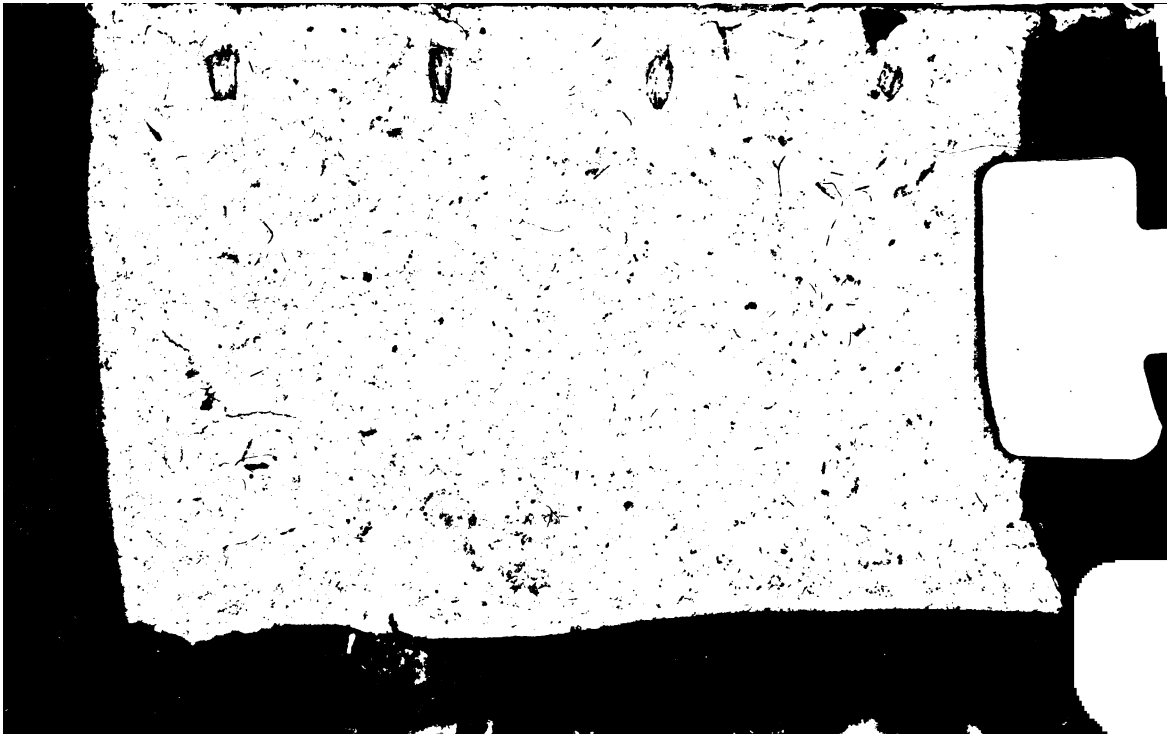

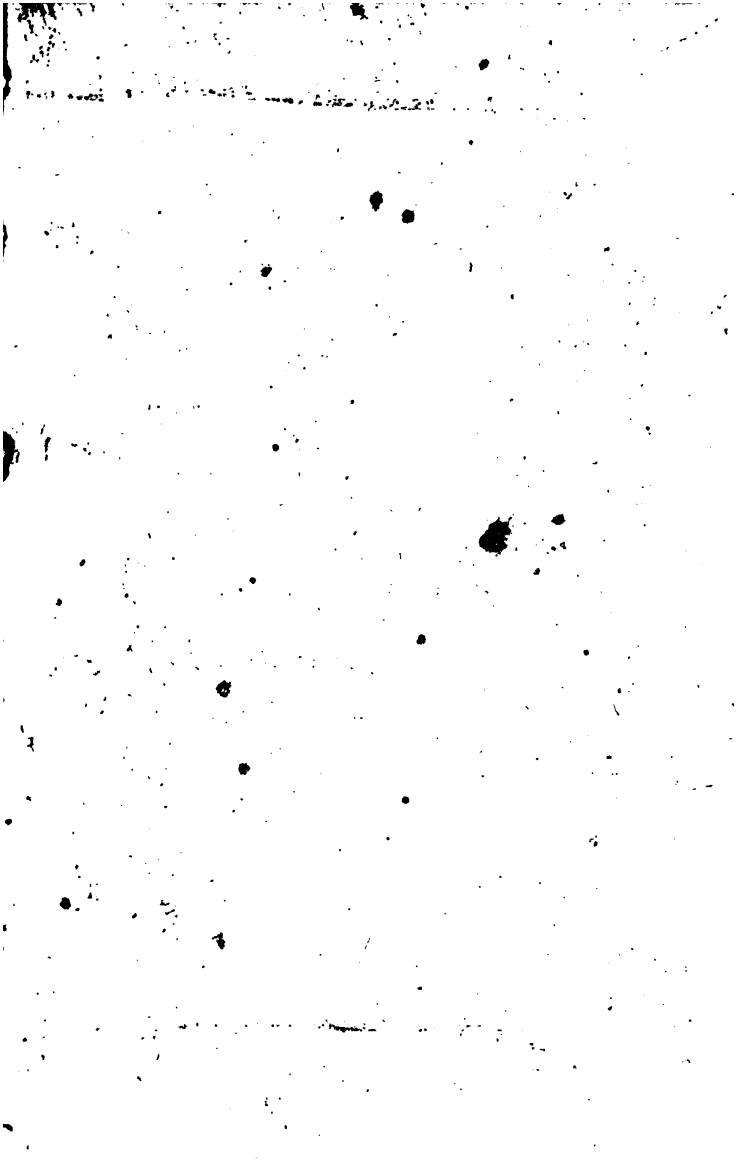

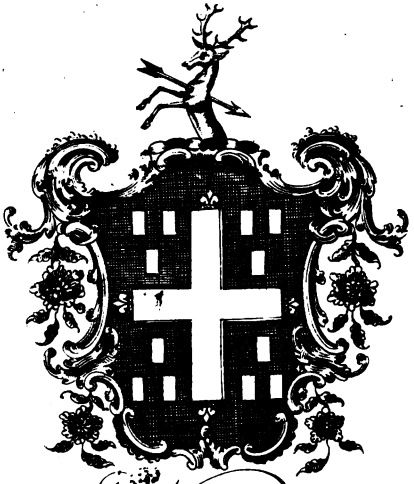

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THE Modern Pleas FOR COMPREHENSION, TOLERATION, AND The taking away the Obligation to the Renouncing of the COVENANT, Considered and Discussed.

LONDON, Printed for *R. Royston*, Bookseller to His most Sacred Majesty. MDCLXXV.

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CONSIDERATIONS

Concerning

Comprehenſion, Toleration,

AND THE

Renouncing the COVENANT.

HE who endeavours to make any Alteration in a ſetled Government either of Church or State, is obliged by all the Rules of Juſtice and of Prudence to alledge ſome very good cauſe, why it is that he doth do ſo; Alteration being in it ſelf ſo great an Inconvenience, as that it ought not by any means to be attempted, but for ſome weighty Reaſon.

Now as to the Church, as it is by Law eſtabliſhed (notwithſtanding all the fearful Outcries which of late have been made againſt it) I would fain have any of our Diſſenting Brethren to anſwer directly, Whether there be any one thing ſinful in her

Communion, or only ſome things (as they conceive) inexpedient? If only inexpedient (as there is good cauſe to believe, that the moſt conſiderable Perſons, and thoſe in no ſmall numbers among them, do ſuppoſe no more) then I would fain know, whether inexpediency alone is a ſufficient and juſt cauſe of Separation? And how well ſoever any particular man among them may think of the Grounds of his own Separation; there is very good evidence, that there are abundance among themſelves who do plainly perceive, and much lament it, that by the means of this preſent Separation, there hath been an entrance made for ſuch Doctrines and Practices into this Nation, which are chargeable with (to phraſe it modeſtly) the very higheſt degrees of inexpediency. When the rule and meaſures of inexpediency are well conſidered of; and regard is had to that great variety of Reſpects in which one and the ſame thing may be both expedient and inexpedient; it will then be found, that inexpediency is a thing, which pri-

vate

vate perſons cannot eaſily determine, indeed are no competent Judges of: Beſides if it were a clear caſe, that in the preſent ſettlement there were ſomething not altogether ſo expedient as were to be wiſhed: Is this a ſufficient warrant for any not only to miſlike ſo much of the Law as they think capable of being mended, but withall openly and avowedly to ſeparate, to unite and joyn in great Combinations againſt the Publick Conſtitutions, only becauſe they are not arrived, in their eſteem, at all poſſible degrees of perfection? He who can ſubmit to no Law but ſuch a one as is exactly made to his own mind in all particulars, muſt reſolve, for any thing I know, never to obey, as long as he lives, any Law which is not of his own making; and not only ſo, but he will find that he muſt not obey many Laws of his own making for any long time neither: If therefore a ſuppoſed inexpediency be the utmoſt of the charge, as I ſuppoſe in the end it will appear to be, then all wiſe men ſhould conſider with themſelves, Whe-

ther any fancied Alteration can be ſecure from equal, if not greater dangers? And before that any ſuch Alteration be made, it ſeems to be but juſt and equal that the New Model be agreed upon by thoſe who do deſign it, and that it be propoſed either to our Governours, or to the publick view, that it may be examined, before admitted; and ſeeing that it is to be of laſting Conſequence, it is to be hoped that it will not be too haſtily concluded upon.

A late ingenious Perſon ſet forth an handſome Diſcourſe upon this Argument, entituled, *Of the Religion of* England, *aſſerting, that Reformed Chriſtianity ſetled in its due Latitude is the Stability and Advancement of this Kingdom.* Wherein he hath attempted ſomething like a Model of a future Settlement; his Diſcourſe is plauſible, and deſires ſeem to be bent on Peace, and many of his Principles look as if they did ſeem to tend much that way, but there ſeems to be this one thing very obſervable in his whole way of Writing, that with great

great Art he doth very dexterously take care not to come too close up to the Argument, and he brings his Reader even to the very Point where the business lies, and almost unperceivably steals by and passeth on to something else; and to a narrow view it will appear plainly, that he keeps himself within the compass of such wide Generalities, that he leaves the Reader in the same uncertainties in which he found him. The Draught of his Design is to be seen, *Sect.* 14. *pag.* 28. which doth consist in these three Contrivances. First, *That there is to be an established and approved Order*: But, because that this alone he finds not to be sufficient; therefore in the second place, there is to be a Provision for a sort of men who cannot come within the establishment, and *they are to be tolerated under certain Restrictions*: Nor is this all; for neither the establishment alone is sufficient, neither will a Toleration of Dissenters from it suffice; and therefore in the third place, there are another sort of men, *who must be only con-*

nived at. Each of theſe Particulars are afterwards conſidered: The eſtabliſhment hath the honour of the firſt place, and hath, as it well deſerves, incomparably the greateſt part of the pains beſtowed upon it, and of this he tells us, *Sect.* 15. *That it muſt not be looſe and incoherent, but well compacted, that it may attain the ends of Diſcipline, which are to promote ſound Doctrine and Godly Life, and keep out Idolatry, Superſtition, and all wicked Error and Practice that tends to the vanquiſhing of the power of Chriſtianity: Now theſe things do not require a conſtitution of narrower bounds than things neceſſary to Chriſtian Faith and Life, and godly Order in the Church,*

Now is it not very plain, that ſuch a Comprehenſion as is here deſcribed, that it ſhall be enabled to attain all theſe great and publick ends here provided for, hath left no place for Toleration or Connivance? and accordingly both thoſe things are huddled together, and in a very few words diſpatched, *Sect.* 18. *pag.* 38. I ſhall lay them down and leave the Reader

to

to judge upon them: *As for others that are of ſound Belief and good Life, yet have taken in ſome Principles leſs congruous to National Settlement, I would never be a means of expoſing them to oppreſſion, Contempt and Hatred, but would admit their Plea as far as it will go, &c. Neverthleſs, their Liberty pleaded for is not to be inordinate but meaſured and limited by the ſafety of true Religion in general, and of the publick and eſtabliſhed Order, &c.*

And now I ſhall take leave to deſire thoſe Perſons, who cannot come within the Comprehenſion, to conſider with themſelves, how very little they are beholding to this their Advocate; he hath not in the leaſt intimated to us what kind of Principles thoſe are which he would have connived at, as *being only leſs congruous to a National Settlement*; nor given us any manner of mark whereby to know them: Beſides, whatever Favour he doth intend for theſe diſſenting Brethren, he hath ſo clogged it with many Qualifications and Limitations, that he hath rendred it ſo

plainly uſeleſs, that I much doubt whether he did ever really intend them any favour at all. Firſt, *They muſt be of ſound Belief and good Life*, Secondly, *Their Plea muſt be admitted as far as it will go*; Now how far that is he hath not told us: Thirdly, *Their Liberty muſt not be inordinate*, but muſt have two meaſures; Firſt, *The ſafety of Religion in general*. Secondly, *The ſafety of the publick eſtabliſhed Order*. Upon theſe Terms, and upon the whole matter, I think, that it is no eaſier a thing to underſtand the Nature and Bounds of that Settlement which our Author is here deſigning, by the placing of ſeveral ſorts of men in the three Ranks of, Firſt, an eſtabliſhment; Secondly, a Toleration; and thirdly, a Connivance, with this Reaſon, for the two latter; For *if God hath received them, why ſhould their fellow-ſervants reject or afflict them cauſleſly? Every true Chriſtian ſhould be tender of all that love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity*; I underſtand, I ſay, as little by all this, what thoſe Particulars are which he would

would have from us, as if he had contented himself with Mr. *Sterry's* three Forms of Believers; and methinks the one Harangue is as edifying and intelligible as the other: *Let us receive one another into the Glory of God, as Christ receiveth us, though that clothing of the outward form be not on the same fashion in all, nor on some so well shaped as on others, to the proportion of the Body, which is Christ. The Lord Jesus hath his Concubines, his Queens, his Virgins; Saints in remoter forms, Saints in higher forms, Saints unmarried to any Form, who keep themselves single for the immediate embraces of their Love*, in his Epistle before *England's* Deliverance from the Northern Presbytery.

Now in these two Gentlemen of very differing Dispensations, there are three sorts of People proposed to our Care, and it is not unlikely that they may be suited each to one another: But this one thing is remarkable in that Discourse of Mr. *Sterry*, that the Presbyterians can, at the very best, hope for no higher Rank than

that

that of Christ's Concubines, as being according to the tenor of that Sermon, if at all Saints, at the very best, Saints in the remoter Forms. The more moderate sort of Independents may indeed by him be accounted Queens, as being *Saints in higher forms*; but for Christ's Virgins, *who are unmarried to any form, and keep themselves single for the immediate embraces of their love*; I cannot imagine who these should be, unless those Saints who are above Ordinances: And for my own part, I must freely profess, that for all the account which our Author hath given us of his three Contrivances of Comprehension, Toleration and Connivance, I cannot at all perceive but that Mr. *Sterry's* way of sorting out the several Ranks of Saints, doth well suit with, and is proportioned to it: And here let any sober man judge, whether the Settlement pretended for in the first of these three Proposals be not absolutely unsetled again in the two other.

But in the next place I must go on to consider a Pretence, much oftner supposed

ſuppoſed than owned, and that is this; Suppoſe that the Terms of the Communion of the Church are not only inexpedient, but really ſinful; if ſo, then I ſhall readily grant, that the Church ought not to be communicated with, while the Terms of her Communion are ſuch. But in this part of the Argument I ſhall preſume to ſay with ſome confidence, and I hope without offence, that however the Teachers of the ſeparated Congregations may ſometimes ſlily inſinuate ſome ſuch Jealouſies into the Heads of their unwary Hearers; yet it is not eaſie to find a conſiderable man amongthem, who will not be aſhamed to own it publickly, or who doth himſelf really believe it.

Now though this Aſſertion may ſeem to carry ſomething of uncharitableneſs in it; becauſe that the Separation from the Church is ſo avowed and preſſed upon the People, as if that it were highly neceſſary, and that Communion with the Church was highly criminal, at leaſt in the Opinion of the Teachers. It being a plain

caſe

caſe that the People are wheedled into Separation, upon the account that they ſuppoſe their Teachers know it to be unlawful: Now as to this, I muſt needs ſay, it is ſhrewdly to be ſuſpected, that there is in this caſe a very great Cheat impoſed by the Preachers and the People upon one another, and by both upon the whole Nation; becauſe that it is as often evident as there is occaſion for making it ſo, that among the Paſtors and the Flock there are not many, who in a time of Tryal approve themſelves to be in good earneſt; I have been credibly informed (not to ſay that I am able to make it good) that Mr. *Calamy* did before His Majeſty, and divers Lords of the Council profeſs, that there was not any thing in the Conſtitutions of the Church to which he could not conform, were it not for the ſcandalizing of others; ſo that in his Eſteem the Conſtitutions of the Church were in themſelves Innocent, and the whole Objection againſt them lay in the miſtakes of other men. Mr. *Tombs* the Leader of the Anabaptiſts, hath

hath writ a Book to shew the lawfulness of resorting to the Publick Congregations. The Author which I before mentioned assures us in behalf of the Presbyterians, that they not only *maintain the Doctrine of the Church of* England, *but likewise communicate in her Publick Worship*, in his second Discourse of the Religion of *England*, *pag.* 171. By which acknowledgment we may take an estimate of the Honesty of their Separation.

Nay, I shall venture to say thus much farther, that the lawfulness of joyning in the Publick Worship is understood by the Layety as well as Clergy amongst them, is evident from these three Things: First, that there are those Persons to be named, who came to Church before the Act of Oblivion, who never did since: Secondly, that immediately after the Act of Uniformity, whilst the Hopes of Toleration were very uncertain, there was a much greater Conformity both in the City of *London*, and over the whole Nation than ever hath been since: Thirdly, that I have enquired

quired and could never learn that there was ſo much as one example to be given of any one of all the Patrons or Proſelytes of the Conventicles who did leave the ſmalleſt Office whatever, rather than he would, in obedience to a late Act of Parliament, joyn in the Prayers and receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the Order of the Church of *England:* From which it doth appear plainly, that in theſe mens eſteem, either there is no ſin in communicating with the Church of *England*, or elſe, that theſe Gentlemen of ſo extreamly tender Conſciences, can deliberately commit a ſin, and that when they are performing the moſt ſolemn Act of Adoration of Almighty God, and with all the ſhews of Devotion imaginable: And ſeeing that theſe things are ſo, is it not huge pitty that a ſetled Church, and a Church in great Reputation over all the Reformed Parts of Chriſtendom, ſhould be run down by a meer noiſe of Conſcience, when it is very plain that when ever there is a real Caſe put,

where

where Conſcience ought to ſhew it ſelf, that then no ſuch thing appears, neither is there the leaſt evidence that it is ſo much as thought upon.

If there be any Objection againſt the preſent Conſtitution; it muſt be either againſt the Articles, the Liturgy, the Canons or the Ceremonies; As to the Articles, there is ſcarce ſo much as one Objection pretended againſt them, farther than as they relate to the following Heads; and if there were, ſuch an Objection could not eaſily be alleadged by the People as a juſt excuſe for their Non-conformity, becauſe they are not at all concerned for to ſubſcribe them, unleſs they bring upon themſelves a voluntary Obligation by ſome Act of their own, as taking a Degree in the Univerſity: But in this Point many words are needleſs; for beſides the Teſtimony of all Churches abroad, we have at home two Witneſſes beyond all exception to the Innocency and Honour of the Articles, even the two late celebrated Advocates, the one for Comprehenſion, the other for To-

leration;

leration: The former assures us in the behalf of those whose Cause he pleads, that *they do receive the Doctrine of Faith contained in the Articles of Religion*, pag. 2. and again pag. 22. *That they heartily embrace the* English *Reformation established by Law*, &c. *and that they do assent to the Doctrine of Faith contained in the Articles of the Church of* England, *and worship God according to that Faith*, pag. 22. *The Peace-offering* doth likewise bear witness for us of that great esteem which is bore unto the Articles of the Church of England in all the Reformed Churches abroad, and withal doth assure us in behalf of the Independents at home, that as to *all which is purely doctrinal in them they do fully embrace and constantly adhere to*, &c. And accordingly he undertakes to profess in the name of them all; *We have no new Faith to declare, no new Doctrine to teach, no private Opinion to divulge, no Point or Truth do we profess, no not one, which hath not been declared, taught, divulged and esteemed as the common Doctrine of the Church of* England

England, *ever ſince the Reformation*, pag. 13.

Thus far therefore our way is clear, that the Doctrine of the Church is found and eſteemed to be ſo in the Opinion of its greateſt Adverſaries. In the next place therefore we are to conſider, whether any reaſonable Plea for Separation can be drawn from any juſt Exception which may be taken againſt the Liturgy; and here there are two ſorts of men to be conſidered: Firſt, thoſe who diſlike all Forms of Prayer in general: Secondly, thoſe who are only diſguſted at ſome particular things in ours.

As to thoſe who are againſt all Forms of Prayer; I believe that the number of them, among conſidering Perſons, is not ſo great, as that any great regard ought to be had unto them; and this muſt needs be ſo, for a reaſon which can never fail; For it cannot chooſe but ſeem ſtrangely abſurd and infinitely unbecoming the great diſtance which is between us and Almighty God, and that great awe which we ought to bear unto him;

that all the Expreſſions of the Publick Devotion of every Congregation in the whole Nation ſhould be left to the arbitrary, and eſpecially the extemporary conception of each ſingle Perſon, who is bold enough to venture upon the taking ſo much upon him. It were very ſtrange if this Kingdom ſhould at this day be ignorant, how very frequently Folly, Hereſie, nay and Blaſphemy, hath been uttered in ſuch kind of Prayers; and it is utterly impoſſible, that upon the indulgence of any ſuch Liberty, ſuch Extravagancies, can with any ſecurity be provided againſt; And it is not unlikely that the greateſt Pretenders to the higheſt Attainments in that way would be not a little out of Countenance; If ſo be that their own Prayers were faithfully taken from their Mouths, and after ſome reaſonable ſpace of time, when they might be ſuppoſed to have forgot them, preſented to their view. And that which renders this evil utterly intolerable, is this, that theſe Prayers which either really are extemporary

(or

elſe only pretended to be ſo) are under that pretence recommended and regarded by the People as the only way of praying by the Spirit; and by that very means the ever bleſſed Spirit is, as far as theſe mens endeavours can be ſucceſful, entituled to all the Follies, Vanity, and Weakneſſes, all the Sin and Errour, and even thoſe very Blaſphemies which are every day committed againſt him. And I think all good Chriſtians are concerned to endeavour, that if a Liberty muſt be given to theſe Perſons to go on and to abuſe the People, yet however that it may be done ſome other way, and they not permitted to bely the Holy Ghoſt.

As for Forms of Prayers, the great reaſonableneſs and even neceſſity of them is very apparent, and in Scripture it ſelf there are Examples enough to be produced; and if any man pleaſeth to enter upon that Argument, I no way doubt but there will be thoſe found who will debate it with him. It ſhall ſuffice at preſent only to ſay, that our Saviour Chriſt

did compoſe a Form of Prayer, and gave it to his Diſciples to uſe: Now if, as great numbers of the People are brought to believe, that there is no praying by the Spirit, beſides praying *Ex tempore*, then no man ever did, or ever could ſay Chriſt's Prayer by the Spirit of Chriſt.

Now, as to the other ſort of Perſons, who have ſome exceptions againſt ſome expreſſions in our Liturgy; thoſe things have been ſo fully examined, that of late we have heard very little of them: And the matter of it is all along ſo clearly unexceptionable, and ſo fitted for the common uſe of all Chriſtians, that all controverſial Expreſſions were deſignedly avoided: Inſomuch that I do not know of any conſiderable Sect amongſt us which may not joyn with us in every expreſſion in it, except the *Socinians*. Now here perhaps ſome Jealouſies may ariſe in the minds of men, that if there were not ſome real exception againſt the Liturgy, then ſo many good Teachers would not lay it aſide; nay, and not only ſo, but, as far as mens Intentions

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can be gueſſed at by their words and actions, very much abhor it.

Now, as to the behaviour of our diſſenting Brethren in this particular, I ſhall deſire their admirers to remember this one thing, that His Majeſty not long after His Happy Reſtauration did put forth a Declaration concerning Eccleſiaſtical Affaires, wherein He did very graciouſly indulge, much to the diſſatisfied Part of the Clergy, in hopes thereby to win upon them; and in that Declaration He did propoſe this unto them, as a way whereby they might ſhew their Gratitude for ſo great a Condeſcention, *That they would read ſo much of the Liturgy as themſelves had no exception againſt:* But with many of them He could not prevail for ſo much as one Syllable, not one Collect, no nor ſo much as one Chapter according to the Rubrick; So much doth yielding work upon that good-natur'd Generation. Now whether this Refractorineſs, as to the whole Book, and every part and parcel of it, could poſſibly proceed ſolely and altogether

from Conſcience, and not very much, if not altogether, from Deſign or Humour, let their beſt Friends ſpeak.

In the next place, now as to the Canons, I do not know that there doth or can ly any Objection againſt them which our preſent Debate is concerned about; becauſe they are no immediate Parts of the Publick Worſhip, and therefore can be no cauſe of the preſent Separation, eſpecially as to the People. As to the Canons made in the year 1640. I muſt needs confeſs, that the *Scotch* Commiſſioners did complain much againſt them, and ſome *Engliſh* Gentlemen made witty Speeches upon them; but they had both of them the ill luck to confeſs the real cauſe of the Pique which they had againſt them, *viz.* The acknowledgement of His Majeſties Authority as being Independent, and above all Coercion, either Papal or Popular. A Doctrine which I muſt needs ſay was very inconſiſtent with thoſe Deſigns which thoſe angry Patriots were at that time carrying on. And I am very much miſtaken if, at this very

very day, a great part of that Quarrel which is taken up againſt the Church be not founded upon this, that it is too faithfully devoted to the Intereſts of the Crown; and that many Perſons are Presbyterians, Independents, Fifth-Monarchy-men, *&c.* as ſo many ſanctified diſguiſes under which they act the Part of Common-wealths-men.

In the next place come we therefore to the Ceremonies; and there indeed the noiſe is very great. An Excellent Perſon, who for his pious labours upon a noble Argument, and much more worthy of his Pen, deſerves much honour, hath in this part of the Queſtion expreſt much more Concern, than, I hope, himſelf upon a ſerious review will admit the Cauſe to bear, in a Book entituled, *Liberty of Conſcience upon its true and proper Grounds aſſerted and vindicated*, &c. hath thus expreſſed himſelf, *p.* 49. *How may we lament over the preſent Impoſition of the Ceremonies now enjoyn'd among us in* England, *which are no part of divine Truth, nor any of Chriſt's*

Inſtitutions, but things perfectly Humane in their Creation; and yet are enforced by the Civil Power upon the Practice and Conſciences of men. Now here, with all due reſpect to that Learned Gentleman, I ſhall deſire him to take notice, whether it be not an Excellency and a Felicity almoſt peculiar to the Church of *England*, that in all her Conſtitutions, her greateſt Adverſaries are forced to betake themſelves to the ſcanning of a few Ceremonies, to find a cauſe, or, to ſpeak more properly, a ſhew of Controverſie; and that himſelf in his own great Judgment hath not been able to find out any other flaw in the Matter of all her Laws, as much ſoever as he doth miſlike the Impoſition of them. As for the Ceremonies themſelves, the Exceptions, or at leaſt the Clamours are very many; That they are uncommanded by God; that they are ſignificant; that they are Will-worſhip; that they are teaching for Doctrines of God the Commandments of men; and laſtly, that they do give ſcandal.

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As to the Ceremonies being uncommanded by God, I never heard of any man who pretended them to be otherwiſe; and therefore it is moſt clear and certain, that that Church doth not teach for Doctrines of God the Commandments of Men, which doth own publickly, that theſe are not the Doctrines of God, but only the Commandments of Man: And if any man doth miſtake in this Caſe, which is a thing incredible that any ſhould do ſo; but if there be ſuch a one, I am ſure that the miſtake is his own and not the fault of the Church: For ſhe hath taken care to prevent it, in the Chapter of Ceremonies before the Common Prayers, wherein ſhe declares that the Ceremonies which are retained, *are retained for Diſcipline and Order, which upon juſt Cauſe may be altered and changed, and therefore are not to be eſteemed equal with Gods Law.* But however, this is plain in the nature of things, that although among the Ceremonies no one in particular is neceſſary, yet in general it is neceſſary, ſo far as Order and Decency

cency is neceſſary, that ſome ſuch there ſhould be.

But in the next place there is an Objection, ſuppoſed to be of much greater force, and that is this; That the Ceremonies are ſignificant: And here I muſt needs confeſs, that if they could have alledged, that the Ceremonies had been inſignificant, the Objection had been much more worthy of having ſome notice taken of it; becauſe that the very nature and whole uſe of Ceremonies doth conſiſt in being ſignificant. And in this I appeal to all Mankind, whether in any one Action Sacred or Civil, any one Ceremony was ever inſtituted, unleſs it were in order to the ſignifying, denoting or expreſſing ſomething by it. Nor is this all; for the Church hath taken care not only to vindicate the Innocency, but withal to declare the uſefulneſs of the ſignificancy of her Ceremonies in the fore-mentioned Preface; *That they are neither dark nor dumb Ceremonies, but are ſo ſet forth that every man may underſtand what they mean and to*

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what uſe they do ſerve: ſo that it is not like that in time to come they ſhould be abuſed.

And after all this, methinks, our Brethren of the Preſbytery ſhould for their own ſakes have had a great care of making uſe of this Objection, as being themſelves as liable to it as any other Perſons. The Authors of the Admonition to the Parliament in Queen *Elizabeths* days, Part 2. have recommended Sitting at the Sacrament, upon this very ſuperſtitious ſcore of Significancy (as in our Caſe they always call it) in theſe words: *As in the Old Teſtament eating the Paſchal Lamb ſtanding, ſignified a readineſs to paſs; even ſo in the receiving it now ſitting, after the example of Chriſt, we ſignifie Reſt, that is, a full finiſhing thorough Chriſt of all the Ceremonial Law, and a perfect Work of Redemption wrought, that giveth reſt for ever.*

And in our own dayes, in that which by them was looked upon as a conſiderable Act of Divine Worſhip and Religious Adoration, the entring into a Publick Solemn National Covenant

venant with Almighty God, as they phraſe it: The doing of this was preſcribed with ſeveral Ceremonies uncommanded in Scripture, and by themſelves intended to be very ſignificant; as is to be found by every one who pleaſeth to look in the Ordinance of *Febr.* 2. 1643. In this Caſe without referring us to any Book, Chapter, or Verſe; they thought it ſufficient to ſay, That it is ordered and ordained by the Lords and Commons in Parliament, that the ſaid Covenant be *ſolemnly* taken in all places, *and for the better and more orderly taking thereof, that theſe Directions enſuing are appointed and enjoyned to be ſtrictly followed:* Of which Directions the thirteenth is this, the manner of taking it to be thus; *The Miniſter to read the whole Covenant diſtinctly and audibly in the Pulpit, and during the time of reading thereof the whole Congregation to be uncovered* (which by the way is a much greater ſhew of Reverence than they have taken care for, either at the reading of the Ten Commandements, or our Saviour's Sermon

Sermon upon the Mount) *and at the end of reading thereof all to take it ſtanding, lifting up their Right Hand bare.* Now I think that it is highly requiſite for theſe men to conſider with themſelves, whether every one of all their own Pleas of the Purity and Simplicity of the Goſpel way of Worſhip without the mixture of humane Inventions, and their bold ſurmiſes of invading the Throne of Chriſt by determining thoſe things which Chriſt hath left free, have any the leaſt force againſt the Ceremonies of the Church, which they have not againſt this preſcribed Formality of their own, in taking the Covenant.

But after all which is poſſible to be ſaid in order to the clearing of the miſtakes about the Ceremonies, there is an Objection which is ſuppoſed not to be capable of any anſwer to be made unto it; and that is this, That be they what they will in themſelves, good men are offended at them, they grieve thouſands of the Godly Brethren, and though we ſhould grant ſuch men to be miſtaken, yet we muſt

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not offend our weak Brethren.

The Caſe of Scandal hath been ſo often and ſo clearly ſtated, that I ſhall ſay the leſs upon it; and therefore, inſtead of the Argument, I ſhall rather chooſe to ſay ſomething to the Perſons who uſe it. In the firſt place I ſhall readily grant, that if any Perſons are really *offended* at the uſe of the Ceremonies, in their own way of underſtanding that word, they muſt needs be very weak Brethren, and I ſhall only ask them the old Queſtion, *How long they will be weak?* And I ſhall profeſs my ſelf to have no very honourable Opinion of the means of Knowledge, the Opportunities of choyce Attainments which are to be had in the Conventicles: If ſo be that thoſe, who are ſuch weak Brethren as not to be got above ſuch ſilly Scruples, are looked upon to be ſufficiently gifted to be Publick Teachers amongſt them.

In the next place I ſhall ask, who taught the People to be offended at a few harmleſs Ceremonies? Who raiſed all their cauſleſs Scruples, infuſed

fuſed ſo many ſenceleſs Jealouſies, and not being content to have at firſt infuſed theſe needleſs fears, do ſtill go on to nurſe up and cheriſh them? Who firſt betrayed great numbers into folly, and ever after continued to humour them in it? He who can conform himſelf, and yet refuſeth to do ſo, for fear leſt his Auditory and Acquaintance ſhould abate in their eſteem or contributions towards him; If he means ſincerely, & to ſhew himſelf an honeſt man, he ought to deal faithfully with his Admirers, & tell them really what himſelf thinks, communicate the Satisfaction which he hath received, and perſwade them not to be longer needleſly afraid where no fear is: It is very plain that the generality of Diſſenters do entertain wild ſuſpicions about the Service of the Church, upon no other ground than an implicite faith which they have in the skill and honeſty of their Teachers. Such and ſuch a one is a very precious and knowing man, and do you think that he would not conform, if he did not know Conformity to be a ſin?

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The Paſtor and his Flock in this Caſe do mutually guide and are guided by each other; he makes it his buſineſs to pleaſe and humour them, , and they look upon it as a great mark of their Judgment, and an infallible token of their Election to admire him.

But if the weakneſs of theſe our Brethren hath ſo great a privilege entailed upon it, as that we muſt do nothing which they have taken a fancy againſt; a thing in it ſelf lawful and impoſed by lawful Authority, muſt immediately become unlawful, if ſo be that any ſcrupulous man can be brought to entertain a fooliſh jealouſie about it: Then is this kind of weakneſs endued with a very ſtrange degree of Omnipotence; becauſe that upon this ſuppoſition, the very miſtakes of men are able to alter the Nature of things; A thing in it ſelf innocent, doth according to this Doctrine, immediately become unlawful, as ſoon as ever that any fanciful deluded man doth erroneouſly conceive it to be ſo; But me-

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thinks that thoſe who pretend to be ſuch eager aſſerters of Chriſtian Liberty, as this ſort of men have always done, ſhould, of all other perſons, the leaſt endure to have it thus trifled with; as to have it believed to be openly expoſed to lie perpetually at the mercy of all the Humour, Melancholy, Artifice, Cheat and Diſcontent in the whole Nation.

But if this be the meaning of thoſe Texts of Scripture, where we are commanded to avoid the giving of Scandal (as moſt certainly and evidently it is not) That the Actions of all Private Men, and the Authority of all Publick Conſtitutions muſt be as often over-ruled as any ſingle Perſon is, either by his own Folly or by the Arts of other men, impoſed upon to believe evil of them; then can no man tell in any matter of Action Sacred or Civil (except in the Matters of immediate and plain divine Precept) what one thing ſhall be lawful for him to do in the very next moment.

But if it be thus appointed by the Apoſtle, That the miſtakes of other

Men, though we ſhould ſuppoſe them to be well-meaning ones, are to have ſo uncontrollable an influence upon the Actions of all private Perſons, and the Decrees of all Publick ones; If it be thus, I ſay, it will thence follow very apparently, that there is a great neceſſity lying upon the Government, of taking care what kind of Perſons are intruſted with teaching the People. For if Conſcience, though never ſo erroneous, are of right, and by Apoſtolical appointment to have ſo great a regard had unto them; then of all things great circumſpection ſhould be uſed, and ſecurity taken, for the Underſtanding and Honeſty of all thoſe who are intruſted to be Guides of Conſciences. For if the Errors of Conſcience are things of ſo great Authority, as to be an immediate *Superſedeas* to our whole Chriſtian Liberty, to all ſorts of Humane Laws, then it is the greateſt Phrenzy imaginable, to grant a promiſcuous Liberty to whoever pleaſeth to teach and inſtruct the People. Alas! the Vulgar are eaſily impoſed upon; and

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it is not impoſſible but that we may find in our days, what St. *Paul* did in his, That there are thoſe *who will ſpeak lyes in hypocriſie becauſe of advantage*; and bring their Auditories to admire thoſe very Doctrines which themſelves do heartily deſpiſe; outwardly court their Hearers, and inwardly laugh at them. And in the mean time, are not Religion and Government like to be at a very fine paſs? when who ſo pleaſeth ſhall have the Privilege of making all poſſible advantages of that very Scruple which himſelf was Author of; and, when all other Objections fail, ſhall be allowed to plead his own exemption from all Obedience to the ſettled Conſtitutions, from the diſſatisfaction of other men, who, if it had not been for him, had never entertained the leaſt thought of being diſſatisfied.

But in the next place it is frequently urged, That thoſe Terms of Communion are not looked upon as ſufficient, which were always looked upon as ſuch in former days; but there

are newer and ſtraiter Bonds added to them; a new Declaration of Aſſent and Conſent: And beſides all this, the Conſciences of men are provoked, which otherwiſe would have remained ſilent, if not ſatisfied; new Scruples are raiſed in the Minds of Men, which before lay buried, and which would otherwiſe have been quite forgot; in that it is not thought ſufficient that the Covenant ſhould be laid aſide, but that it ſhould be formally renounced; and not only ſo, but it is required that men muſt ſwear not only for themſelves, but that no man elſe is obliged by it.

Now after all this wonder, there is not any one Thing which is not very eaſily accounted for: For ſurely it hath been among men not at all unuſual, nor in it ſelf ſtrange, that where former ſecurities have been found too ſlight, to add others to them. As for the Declaration of Aſſent and Conſent, the addition which it doth make to the former Subſcriptions is not ſo conſiderable, as to raiſe a ſcruple in the

the mind of any man who was real in them. And I ſuppoſe that the great Myſtery which is pretended to lie in the terrible ſound of Aſſent and Conſent, which the People are taught to be affrighted at, as if ſome diſmal meaning were hid under it, is nothing elſe but an Art to raiſe their Jealouſie, that ſo they might be the better prepared for the finding out ſome plot or other in the following Renunciation of the Covenant. A thing which was ordered not without great cauſe; and it is very ſuſpicious that that Cauſe doth not only continue, but increaſe, as appears but too plainly from this, That there is ſo great a Clamour raiſed upon it. And this Cauſe did in a great meaſure proceed from themſelves, and that great ſtir which they made about the Obligation of the Covenant, in the firſt and ſecond year immediately after the Reſtoration of his Majeſty, both from Preſs and Pulpit: Parties were made in the City, and endeavoured to be made in Parliament, for the owning of that Obligation. It was with great

confidence urged, that it was *A Publick and National Oath, binding all Perſons of this Nation, whether they did ſwear it perſonally or not, and all Poſterity after us in their particular places; and all that ſhall ſucceed into the Publick Places and Politick Capacities of this Kingdom, to purſue the things covenanted for: And this Obligation is for ever to remain and abide, and by no Humane Act or Power to be abſolved or made void*; as, amongſt others, Mr. *Crofton* hath endeavoured to prove at large in his famous Writings on that Subject. And, to ſpeak the truth, if we once admit the Grounds which this Party of Men do go upon, what he doth alledge hath great reaſon in it; it being very evident, that thoſe Clauſes which he doth produce out of the Covenant, do ſuppoſe all Poſterity to be involved in them: And this he urgeth not as his own ſingle Opinion, but as the Sence of his whole Party; and, beſides the Evidence of the thing, he alledgeth, The Teſtimony to the Truth of Jeſus Chriſt and the Covenant, by

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the *London* Miniſters, *Dec.* 14. 1647. ſeveral of which are at this preſent Preachers to the ſeparated Congregations; In which it is plainly declared, That it is not in the Power of any perſon or perſons upon Earth to diſpence with or abſolve us from it. Nay, the Power of Parliaments, which in other caſes is allowed to be large enough, is in this bound up, as Mr. *Cr.* tells us, *p.*139. *That the Parliament conſiſting of Lords and Commons, and that in their Publick Capacity as a Parliament, the Houſe of Commons aſſembled in their Houſe, and in formality of the Body of the Nation, with their Speaker before them, went unto St.* Margarets *Church in* Weſtminſter *with the greateſt Solemnity imaginable, did, as the Repreſentative Body of the Kingdom, ſwear this Covenant: which, as a farther Teſtimony that it was a National Covenant, they cauſed to be printed with their Names ſubſcribed, and to be hanged up in all Churches, and in their own Houſe, as a Compaſs whereby (in conformity to right, Reaſon and Religion) to ſteer their then Debates, and to di-*

date TO ALL THAT SHOULD SUCCEED IN THAT PLACE AND CAPACITY what obligation did before God ly upon the Body of this Nation.

Thoſe who plead for the removal of the Renunciation of the Covenant, either they do believe, that the Covenant doth oblige at this time, or, that it doth not oblige; if they do believe that it doth not oblige, why may they not declare that they do believe it not to do ſo? One Reaſon may indeed be given, why the Preachers themſelves may believe the Covenant not to oblige, and yet that they ſhould by all means avoid the declaring that they do thus believe; and that is this, that they would have the People believe it to have an Obligation, although themſelves believe it to have none. A Perſwaſion this, which, in ſome juncture of Affairs or other, they may chance to make very great uſe of; and that this may not be altogether incredible their Procedure hath not been one jot honeſter than this amounts to in another

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part of the Controverſie between us. It is well known that there are among them, and not among the meaneſt of them who have believed the Liturgy and Ceremonies to be very Innocent, and yet could be never brought to ſay one word to the People of this their belief; But on the other ſide now, if they are really perſwaded that the Covenant doth carry a laſting Obligation along with it: In that Caſe I ſhall not, during that Perſwaſion of theirs, deſire them to renounce it; but withall I muſt crave their leave to add this further, that during that Perſwaſion of theirs, I think it but reaſonable; that the Government ſhould caſt a very watchful eye over them. And of this I ſhall give an account from the Covenant it ſelf, wherein there are ſo many things, and of ſuch fatal and univerſal conſequence, covenanted for, that the whole Nation is highly concerned that no conſiderable Part of it ſhould look upon themſelves, and every Body elſe, as lying under the Obligation of the Oath of God, to watch all

opportunities wherein they may accompliſh ſuch great and publick miſchiefs, as will appear by a particular Conſideration of the Thing it ſelf.

ARTICLE 1.

That we ſhall ſincerely, really, and conſtantly, through the Grace of God, endeavour in our ſeveral Places and Callings the preſervation of the Reformed Religion in the Church of Scotland, *in Doctrine, Worſhip, Diſcipline, and Government againſt our Common Enemies: The Reformation of Religion in the Kingdoms of* England *and* Ireland *in Doctrine, Worſhip, Diſcipline, and Government, according to the Word of God, and the Example of the beſt Reformed Churches: And ſhall endeavour to bring the Churches of God in the three Kingdoms to the neareſt Conjunction and Uniformity in Religion, in Confeſſion of Faith, Form of Church-Government, Directory for Worſhip and Catechizing; That we and our Poſterity after us, may as Brethren, live in Faith and Love, and that the Lord may delight*

delight to dwell in the midſt of us.

In which Article it is eaſie to obſerve many things lyable to very juſt and material Exceptions; as firſt, By what Authority can any private man in *England*, if he keeps himſelf within his own Place and Calling, intermeddle either in the Preſervation or Alteration of the Religion and Government of the Church and Kingdom of *Scotland*? Nay, by what Authority can any Perſon in this Kingdom whatever, be he in what Publick Capacity he will (His Majeſty only excepted, or thoſe who act by Commiſſion from Him) have any thing to do with the Concerns in that Kingdom? And ſecondly, this firſt Part of the Article may upon very good Grounds be ſuppoſed to be inconſiſtent with the remaining Parts of it: For we are ſworn to *preſerve the Doctrine, Diſcipline*, &c. *of* Scotland, and withall, *to bring the three Kingdoms to the neareſt Uniformity in Religion, Confeſſion of Faith, form of Church-Government, Directory for Worſhip and Cate-*

Catechizing; So that *Scotland* muſt neceſſarily be our Pattern; and yet in the ſame breath we are ſworn to reform *England* and *Ireland*, according to the Word of God, and the Example of the beſt Reformed Churches: And it is more than poſſible, that our own Church, as it is already by Law eſtabliſhed, or at leaſt ſome other Church beyond the Seas, may come altogether as near the Word of God, as that of *Scotland*: And what is to be done in that Caſe? And in the third place, all the other Diſſenters whatever, beſides the Presbyterians, are highly concerned to ſee that the Covenant is not looked upon as a thing of any obligation; becauſe that that is expreſs for Uniformity, and as ſuch, is not leſs than abſolutely inconſiſtent with Liberty of Conſcience; and as hard thoughts ſoever as the ſmaller Sects have entertained concerning the Biſhops; they are much more concerned to ſecure themſelves againſt not a few, nor the leaſt Conſiderable, among their own dear Brethren,

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ARTICLE 2.

That we ſhall in like manner, without reſpect of Perſons, endeavour the Extirpation of Popery, Prelacy; that is, Church-Government by Archbiſhops, Biſhops, their Chancellors, and Commiſſaries, Deans, Deans and Chapters, Archdeacons, and all other Eccleſiaſtical Officers depending on that Hierarchy; Superſtition, Hereſie, Schiſm, Profaneneſs, and whatſoever ſhall be found contrary to ſound Doctrine, and the Power of Godlineſs, leſt we partake in other mens ſins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their Plagues; and that the Lord may be One, and his Name One in theſe Kingdoms.

As to the former part of this Article, that which concerns the overthrow of the eſtabliſhed Government of the Church, I ſhall only ſay this, that the Modeſty of theſe men is in this caſe very admirable, and there is no doubt to be made, but that in any other Kingdom it would be thought to

to be ſo; in that they do expect to be admitted into the Preferments of the Church, and to be allowed to be publick Preachers in it; and yet at the very ſame time, they do deſire to be excuſed from declaring, that they are not of a Perſwaſion, that there doth ly an obligation by Oath upon them themſelves, the whole Nation, or (to ſay no more) at leaſt upon ſome other Perſon, who ought to be nameleſs, to overthrow the whole frame of the Government of that Church, which they deſire to be admitted into the Preferments of, and particularly of that Biſhop by whoſe hands they are admitted. I would fain know whether there be any other Part of the World, where any Perſons dare to demand of the preſent eſtabliſhment, that it would for their ſakes ſo far relax it ſelf, in order to their admiſſion into it. Sure theſe menimagine, that the Church is in a very great neceſſity of them, that it cannot ſtand one moment without them; when, in the very Terms of their Admiſſion, they do demand no leſs than this, that

a new Law ſhould be made on purpoſe, whereby they may be privileged from declaring, whether or no it is lawful for them to ſuffer the Church to continue two moments longer than there ſhall ariſe an opportunity, wherein they may be able to overthrow it.

As for the remaining Part of the Article concerning *Superſtition, Hereſie, Schiſm, Profaneneſs, and whatſoever ſhall be found contrary to ſound Doctrine or the Power of Godlineſs*, &c. I ſhall leave that to our Friends of the Preſbytery and their Separating Brethren to diſpute about it: And it is clear enough, that they are altogether as unlike to agree in thoſe Particulars, as I am with either of them: As lovingly as ever they may look upon one another at preſent, I am ſure that the Covenant, when opportunity ſerves, will be found to be levelled as directly againſt the Conventicles, as againſt the Cathedrals. I ſhall obſerve no more in this Article beſides the great Charitableneſs of the Concluſion, *That the Lord may be One and his*

his Name One in the Three Kingdoms: As if the Church of *England* followed after ſtrange Gods, and that thoſe ordained by her were really no other than, as they are often ſtiled according to the good manners which the People learn of too many ſuch Preachers, the Prieſts of *Baal.*

ART. 3.

We ſhall with the ſame Sincerity, Reality and Conſtancy in our ſeveral Vocations, endeavour, with our Eſtates and Lives, mutually to preſerve the Rights and Privileges of the Parliament and the Liberties of the Kingdoms; and to preſerve and defend the Kings Majeſties Perſon and Authority, in the Preſervation and Defence of the True Religion and Liberties of the Kingdom: That the World may hear witneſs with our Conſciences of our Loyalty, and that we have no thoughts and intention to diminiſh his Majeſties *Juſt Power and Greatneſs.*

This Article hath been very much and

and very much inſiſted on and gloried in for the ſeeming Loyalty of one Expreſſion in it : But, in order to a right underſtanding; let us conſider how Affairs ſtood at that time: It is well known, that the Compilers and Enjoyners of this Covenant were, at that very time, in actual Arms (I hope that it is no offence, if I ſay in actual Rebellion) againſt the King. This very Covenant was a great Inſtrument by which they did carry on their Deſign then on foot againſt Him: The King was betrayed and ſold by one part of the Covenanters, thoſe from *Scotland*, he was bought, impriſoned, and in effect depoſed by another part of the Covenanters, thoſe in *England*, and by the moſt Loyal of them, even the Lords and Commons Aſſembled at *Weſtminſter*; who by their Votes of Non-addreſs, *Febr.* 17. 1647. (which, let us note, was long before the Secluſion by the Army) did declare, Firſt, *That they will make no farther Addreſſes or Applications to the King:* And in the fourth Vote, *That they will receive no more Meſſages from*

the King, and do enjoyn that no Perſon whatever do receive or bring any Meſſage from the King to Both or either Houſes of Parliament, or to any other Perſon; which Votes they publiſhed with a Declaration, wherein they lay down ſome few of thoſe many Reaſons (as they expreſs it) why they cannot repoſe any more Truſt in Him.

Nay, long before that time, when the *Scots* complained of ſome rigours uſed towards His Majeſty, as being contrary to the Covenant, the Houſe of Commons did return them this Anſwer, *Novemb.* 18. 1646. *We obſerve that you mention the Defence of the King twice, from the Covenant; but in both places you leave out, in the preſervation of the true Religion*, &c. *A main Clauſe without which the other ought not to be mentioned.* Which very Anſwer themſelves did afterwards receive from their own Army, in a Declaration from St. *Albans*, *Novemb.* 18. 1648. Where they reminded their Maſters of their own Doctrine, *The Defence of the King*, ſay they, *is to be underſtood with this reſtriction; In the Preſervation*

ſervation of, &c. *or otherwiſe the whole Proceedings of Both Kingdoms in making and maintaining War againſt Him in Defence of Religion and Liberties are queſtionable for breach of Covenant; ſince that way of preſerving did probably tend to the deſtruction and was without any ſafe proviſion, either for his Perſon, or that Authority which can properly be called His, or underſtood in Conjunction with His Perſon; but that therein His Perſon might probably have been deſtroyed under the Sword or by a Bullet, yea was ordinarily endeavoured to be ſo, as well as the Perſons of others in Arms with Him; and that Authority of His was certainly oppoſed and endeavoured to be deſtroyed thereby, inſtead of being defended.* Remonſtrance from St. *Albans*, *p.* 55.

Indeed, about the time of the King's Murther, many of the Covenanters did declare themſelves a little diſſatisfied with that way of Proceeding againſt Him; and did (how reaſonably upon their own Grounds, I know not) urge the Covenant for His Preſervation: But of

their Behaviour in this Caſe, I ſhall give only the Account of an Author, who lived in thoſe times when they had opportunities enough to have taken what account of Him themſelves pleaſed. His Words are theſe, in a Book entituled, *A ſhort View of the Life and Reign of King* Charles *the Firſt, Monarch of Great* Britain, *pag.* 94. *The Presbyterians carried on this Tragedy to the very laſt Act, from the firſt bringing in of the* Scots *to the beginning of the War, and from the beginning of the War till they had brought Him Priſoner to* Holmby-Houſe, *and then quarrelled with the Independents for taking of the Work out of their hands, and robbing them of the long expected fruit of their Plots and Practices. They cried out againſt them in their Pulpits and clamoured againſt them in their Pamphlets for that, of which themſelves were at leaſt parcel-guilty, Et ſi non re at voto ſaltem Regicidæ, &c. On the other ſide, the Independents, who waſhed their hands in the blood of the King, ſeemed as deſirous as the Presbyterians to waſh their hands of it: By them*

it was alleadged more calmly, that they had put Charles Stuart *to death, againſt whom they proceeded as the Cauſe of ſo much bloodſhed; but that the King had been muthered a long time before by the Presbyterians, when they deprived Him of His Crown, His Sword, His Scepter; of His Crown, by forcing from Him thoſe Prerogatives which placed Him in a Throne of Eminency above His People; of His Sword, by wreſting the* Militia *out of His Hands, by which He was made unable to protect them; and of His Scepter, in diveſting Him of His Power of calling Parliaments, and of His* Negative *Voyce in making thoſe Laws by which He was to govern all Eſtates of Men under His Dominion: And more than ſo, they had deprived Him of His Natural Liberty as a Man; of the Society of His Wife, as he was a Husband; of the Converſation of His Children, as He was a Father; of the Attendance of His Servants, as He was a Maſter; and in a word, of all thoſe Comforts which might make Life valued for a Bleſſing: So that there was nothing left for the Independents to do,*

but to put an end to thoſe Calamities into which this miſerable man, this Vir dolorum, *as He might very well be called, had been ſo accurſedly plunged by the Presbyterians.*

To which I ſhall only add this farther, that notwithſtanding all that Loyalty which the Covenanters have ſo often boaſted of, from the Obligation of the Covenant; yet it is well known, that the Covenant was placed by themſelves as a bar between him and his Throne, that without ſubmitting to this, they could not endure to think of His Reſtauration to that; and this to ſo high a degree, that even in *January*, 1648. Notwithſtanding the apparent danger which the King's Life was known to be in, yet even then, the General Aſſembly of *Scotland* did violently oppoſe all courſes thought upon for His Relief, and preſſed earneſtly, *That His Majeſtie's Conceſſions and Offers concerning Religion may directly and poſitively be declared unſatisfactory to the Parliament, and that there ſhall be no engagement for reſtoreying His Majeſty to one of His Houſes with*

with Honour, Freedom and Safety, before Security and Aſſurance be had from His Majeſty by His Solemn Oath under Hand and Seal; that He ſhall for Himſelf and His Succeſſors conſent and agree to Acts of Parliament enjoyning the League and Covenant, and fully eſtabliſhing Presbyterian Government, Directory of Worſhip, and Confeſſion of Faith in all his Majeſties Dominions; and that his Majeſty ſhall never make oppoſition to any of theſe, or endeavour any change thereof. *Vid.* Declar. of Jan. 10. 1648.

Now therefore, ſeeing it is ſo plain a Caſe, that in the Opinion of the Compilers and Enjoyners of the Covenant; all the fore-mentioned Violences both might and ought to have been uſed againſt the King, by vertue and in purſuance of the Covenant: It thence follows unavoidably, that His Majeſty is not a little concerned to be very watchful over all thoſe Perſons who are ſo tender of the honour of the Covenant, that they demand it as the Condition of their Admiſſion into the Church, that they may by

no means be queſtioned concerning their Opinion about its Obligation.

ARTICLE 4.

We ſhall with all faithfulneſs endeavour the diſcovery of all ſuch as have been or ſhall be Incendiaries, Malignants or evil Inſtruments, by hindering the Reformation of Religion, dividing the King from His People, or one of the Kingdoms from another, or making any Faction or Parties among the People contrary to this League and Covenant, that they may be brought to publick trial, and receive condign puniſhment, as the degree of their offences ſhall require or deſerve, or the Supreme Judicatories of both Kingdoms reſpectively, or others, having power from them for that effect, ſhall judge convenient.

It is very well known what the meaning of *Incendiaries and Malignants* is, in this Article: And it is ſhrewdly to be ſuſpected, That thoſe who are perſwaded of the Obligation of this Oath, are likewiſe perſwaded, that thoſe *Incendiaries and Malignants*,

Malignants, have not as yet been brought to condign puniſhment; and whatever benefit the Covenanters themſelves may receive by an Act of Oblivion, it is much to be ſuſpected, that thoſe who are covenanted againſt are looked upon as not capable of receiving any advantage by it: And there is reaſon to believe, that thoſe who ſcruple the Validity of that Act of Parliament which declares againſt the Obligation of the Covenant, are by no means to be truſted, leſt, if opportunity ſhould ſerve, they would not likewiſe ſcruple the Validity of that Act of Parliament which gave them Indempnity. For thus, according to their own Grounds, they may argue, The Act of Oblivion is againſt the Covenant, and then it followeth in the next place, that it is againſt their Conſciences; It is againſt the *Oath of God lying upon themſelves and upon the whole Nation and upon all Poſterity*, and no humane Act or Power can abſolve them or any one elſe from it; and every thing done againſt the Covenant is null and void,

the

the whole Nation being bound up by it to all Ages. For therefore it was *That the Covenant was hung up in the Parliament, as a Compaſs whereby to ſteer their Debates, and to dictate to all, who ſhall ſucceed in that place and capacity, what obligation doth before God lie upon the Body of this Nation*, as I have before obſerved. Now upon theſe mens ſuppoſitions, there is no Security to be had, but that they who paſſed an Act of Oblivion, to pardon any thing done againſt the Covenant, are involved in guilt and liable to puniſhment for ſo doing; and are upon thoſe very accounts to expect, when Providence ſhall put an opportunity into the hands of theſe Zealots, the very ſame Return which the Prophet made to *Ahab*, 1 King. 20. v. 42. *Thus ſaith the Lord, Becauſe thou haſt let go a Man whom I have appointed to deſtruction, therefore thy life ſhall go for his life, and thy people for his people.*

The next thing which I ſhall obſerve in this Article is this, That thoſe Perſons who covenanted together, among

among other things, to maintain the Liberties of the Kingdom, have ſo far forgot themſelves, as that in that very Covenant they have ſet up an Arbitrary Government: The Rule of condign puniſhment here ſet down, is not any known Law, no, not ſo much as a new one of their own making; *but, as the degree of their offences ſhall require or deſerve, or the Supreme Judicatories of both Kingdoms reſpectively, or others having power from them for that effect, ſhall judge convenient.* By which words it is plain, that they did not look upon it as ſufficient to take an arbitary Power into their own hands, but likewiſe did delegate it to as many elſe beſides as they pleaſed.

ART. 5.

Whereas the happineſs of a bleſſed Peace between the Kingdoms, denied in former times to our Progenitors, is by the good Providence of God granted to us, and hath lately been concluded and ſettled by both Parliaments; we ſhall each

each one of us, according to our Place and Intereſt, endeavour that they may be conjoyned in a firm Peace and Union to All Poſterity, and that Juſtice may be done upon all wilful oppoſers thereof, in manner expreſſed in the precedent Article: According to the preceding Article, *i.e.* as ſhall be judged convenient.

The Modeſty of theſe men is very admirable, in that they would outface the World, that *England* and *Scotland* were never at peace in former times, or, rather their Language is ſomething myſterious, that the Two Nations were never at Peace till they had involved them in a War. But as in the former Article they were, as I have ſhewed, tender of the Liberty of the Subject; ſo in this they have been very careful of the Authority of his Majeſty, in that they have taken upon them to make peace with another Kingdom without him; and withal when that very Peace was nothing elſe, beſides their joyning Forces againſt him.

ART.

ART. 6.

We ſhall alſo according to our Place and Calling, in this Common Cauſe of Religion, Liberty and Peace of the Kingdoms, aſſiſt and defend all thoſe that enter into this League and Covenant, in the maintaining and purſuing thereof; and ſhall not ſuffer our ſelves directly or indirectly, by whatſoever Combination, Perſwaſion or Terrour to be divided and withdrawn from this bleſſed Union and Conjunction; whether to make defection to the contrary Part, or to give our ſelves to deteſtable Indifferency or Neutrality in this Cauſe, which ſo much concerns the Glory of God, the Good of the Kingdom, and the Honour of the King: But ſhall all the dayes of our lives zealouſly and conſtantly continue therein againſt all oppoſition, and promote the ſame according to our power againſt all Letts and Impediments whatſoever: And what we are not able of our ſelves to ſuppreſs or overcome, we ſhall reveal and make known, that it may be timely prevented and removed: All which

which we ſhall do in the ſight of God.

From which Article it it is plainly to be ſeen, That thoſe who do believe themſelves to lie under the Obligation of this Covenant, are and ought to be looked upon as a Party already formed and combined together againſt the whole Nation beſides, having a common Band to unite and tie them faſt together: And this is ſuch an Union as they look upon as ſacred and indiſſoluble. And the Ends, in order to which they are thus combined, are in their eſteem ſuch, as that nothing can excuſe the leaſt intermiſſion in their purſuance after them, beſides an abſolute Impoſſibility, and even in that caſe it is lawful for them only, to delay ſo long, as to expect a more favourable ſeaſon: For they are according to this Article, *Never to be wrought over to ſo much as a deteſtable Indifferency or Neutrality in this Cauſe of God; but zealouſly and conſtantly to continue therein againſt all oppoſition, all letts and impediments whatſoever.*

And

And having now laid down the Six Articles of the Covenant, I ſhall only add a few of the laſt words of the large and ſolemn Concluſion of it; wherein they *pray God to bleſs their proceedings herein with ſuch ſucceſs as may be an encouragement to other Churches, groaning under, or in danger of the Yoke of Antichriſtian Tyranny, to joyn in the ſame or like Aſſociation or Covenant, to the Glory of God, the Enlargement of the Kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt, and the Peace and Tranquillity of Chriſtian Kingdoms and Common-wealths.*

It hath been often ſaid in the behalf of the Preſbyterians, that they did not engage in the late War under a leſs Authority than that of the Two Houſes of Parliament: What Authority the Two Houſes of Parliament have in raiſing a War againſt the King ſhall be no part of this Enquiry, nor whether the Lords and Gentlemen who at that time ſtaid at *Weſtminſter* were the Two Houſes of Parliament? Be theſe two things as they will, although it is not unknown what

may

may be ſaid as to both thoſe Caſes; yet however the Covenant, hath informed us of another ſort of Authority under which a War may be raiſed at any time againſt all the Kings in *Europe*: Becauſe in theſe words is held forth a publick Invitation to all Subjects whatſoever, who do either really groan under, or are in any danger of any thing, which our folk have pleaſed to call, or themſelves ſhall chance to fancy to be a Yoke of Antichriſtian Tyranny, to enter either into this or the like Aſſociation or Covenant. Now I ſuppoſe, that it is no eaſie task to make out, that all Kingdoms have Parliaments endued with ſo large a ſhare of the Soveraignty, as that they have Authority to take up Arms againſt their reſpective Princes: And if there were ſuch Parliaments every where, this Invitation is only made to the Chriſtian Churches, without taking the leaſt notice of Parliaments; nay with a full aſſurance that there were no ſuch Parliaments to be taken notice of. So that by this Doctrine the

the Church alone may enter into aſſociation againſt the State upon the ſcore of Religion (eſpecially if it can but cry out Antichriſt) may engage the Subjects of all *Europe* againſt their Soveraigns, be they Princes or Commomwealths.

I know very well that thoſe who urge the taking away of the Declaration enjoyned concerning the renouncing of the Covenant, have one evaſion whereby to avoyd entring into the merits of the Cauſe, and that is this, The ſeeming unreaſonableneſs of that Clauſe; Alſo *I hold that there lieth no Obligation upon me, or any other Perſon from the Oath commonly called the Solemn*, &c. Is it not unjuſt that one man ſhould be bound to ſwear to the Obligations of another? As plauſible ſoever as this may ſeem, no doubt it is but an evaſion; for it is well known whom they mean by that other Perſon whom they ſuppoſe to be obliged; and beſides to make this Caſe ſeem much harder than it is indeed; They endeavour to perſwade us, that this renunciation is what really it is

not; for it is plain, that this Declaration is not an Oath, nor any thing like one, only we are called upon to declare what our Opinion is in a Caſe there put to us; we are ſo far from being required in this Caſe unto the ſwearing for any one elſe; that we are not called upon to ſwear for our ſelves, we do not ſwear that there doth ly no Obligation either upon our ſelves or any other Perſon, but only that we do not believe that there doth.

And after all this, the pretence of being ſcrupulous about declaring any thing concerning *the Obligation of any other Perſon* hath one great reſerve in it: For, the very ſuppoſal of the poſſibility of *that* is in effect to ſay, that the Covenant as to the matter of it is in every particular reſpect lawful; for unleſs it be lawful in every particular reſpect, no Body can be obliged by it; and if once it be granted to be a lawful Oath, it will be very eaſie thence to deduce that it is obligatory to more Perſons than one.

And

And thus I have taken a ſhort review of the Covenant, wherein it is very plain that there are many things of ſuch univerſal and dangerous Conſequence therein Covenanted for, as do render it not altogether unworthy the care of thoſe who are in Publick Places to conſider a little with themſelves, what the meaning of it is, that ſo many men do profeſs themſelves to have ſo deep a ſenſe of the Obligation of the Covenant, as that a Law muſt be made on purpoſe to gratifie them in that humour: The Publick Conſtitutions muſt veil to their unknown Scruples, and with the Honour of having the Wiſdom of the whole Nation confeſs it ſelf to have been all along miſtaken, they expect to be admitted Publick Preachers; This Plea is ſuch a one as doth look as if it had ſome deep meaning in it, and ought to be thoroughly underſtood before admitted; I ſhall end this Argument as I did begin it, Either theſe men do believe that the Covenant doth oblige, or, they do not believe it, if they do not believe it to

oblige, I cannot ſee what Honeſt Reaſon can be given why they ſhould ſcruple to declare this their Belief; But on the other ſide, if they do really believe that the Covenant doth oblige them, it is much more adviſeable, that this Perſwaſion ſhould keep them out of the Church, than that they ſhould bring this Perſwaſion into it: And whereas the Law-makers hoped that the Peeviſhneſs of this ſort of People would within ſome reaſonable compaſs of time have grown weary of it ſelf, and accordingly had provided that the Declaration againſt the Covenant ſhould, within a few Years, of courſe have become antiquated; the Clamours of theſe men have given ſo reaſonable a Jealouſie about their retaining their old Principles, as may well ſerve to awaken the Caution of thoſe in Authority, ſo far as to put them in mind of giving New Life to their Old Act, and enlarging the terms of its Duration: For ſeeing that the Diſſenters do value themſelves ſo much upon their remembring the Covenant; our Governours

vernours have no ſmall Concern to let it be ſeen, that neither do they forget it.

To all which hath been already ſaid, I ſhall add this one Thing; It may not unjuſtly ſeem a Cauſe of much wonder how it ſhould come to paſs, that the Covenant ſhould be looked upon as a thing much more ſacred and indiſſoluble now than it was in former Dayes; That Correſpondence which Mr. *Jenkins*, and a great many other *London* Miniſters held with the *Scots*, for the ſake of which he and others were caſt into Priſon, will not be denied to be in purſuance of the Obligation of the Covenant, and of that Part of it which they are alwayes glorying in, the Loyal and Meritorious Part, as to the Authority of His Majeſty: Now I dare appeal to any Member of his preſent Congregation, whether he hath not renounced this part of the Obligation of the Covenant, in theſe following Words.

To the Supreme Authority, the Parliament of the Commonwealth of ENGLAND.

The Humble Petition of *William Jenkin* Priſoner.

THat the Providence of God hath in the Judgement of your Petitioner as evidently appeared in the removing of others from, & inveſting your Honours with the Government of this Nation, as ever they appeared in the taking away or beſtowing of any Government in any Hiſtory of any Age in the World.

That he apprehends that a refuſal to be ſubject to this preſent Authority under the pretence of upholding the Title of ANT ONE upon the Earth is a refuſal to acquieſce in the wiſe and righteous pleaſure of God; ſuch an oppoſing of the Government ſet up by the Soveraign Lord of Heaven and Earth, as none can have peace either in acting or ſuffering for: And that your Petitioner looks

looks upon it as his Duty to yield to this Authority all active and chearful Obedience, even for Conſcience ſake, &c.

Here is a plain Renunciation of all the Obligation of the Covenant, ſo far as reſpects the King; the good man is quit by Providence, nay did not that whole Party, as ſcrupulous as ever they may now ſeem, from that time forward ever afterward till the laying aſide the Family of *Cromwels*, abſolutely lay aſide all thought of any manner of Obligation either to King or Covenant.

And now after all theſe dangers which will be perpetually impending over us from the Covenant, and which we can never be ſecure from, ſo long as there is the leaſt pretence remaining among us, that that Oath is at all obligatory; there is another thing which may juſtly raiſe our wonder, and may concern us much more than the generality of us are aware, to enquire what may the meaning of it; and that is this, to conſider how it doth come to paſs, that the Preſbyte-

rians and the other Sectaries do all at preſent unite in the Common Plea of Liberty of Conſcience; For it is very plain that in this part of the Debate between us, their Inclinations, Judgements and Intereſts are very different, and their Pleas utterly inconſiſtent. It is not ſo long ago, but that ſome alive remember it, that the ſweet noyſe of Liberty of Conſcience made a very pleaſant ſound, and the Diſſenters from the legal Eſtabliſhment were all for a while hugely taken themſelves, and did endeavour to charm each other with it; but within the compaſs of a very little time, they themſelves could not tell what to do with it, fell out with one another about the Nature, Bounds, and Limits of it; and even at this very day it is a clear Caſe, That any Private Perſon, without the leaſt entrenching upon the Authority of his Superiours, may ſafely undertake, that all the Pretenders to Liberty of Conſcience in the whole Nation, ſhall every one of them have their utmoſt wiſh, in the very ſame moment that they themſelves

themſelves ſhall all agree about it; I muſt needs ſay that this Plea is at the firſt view ſomething ſpecious, and hath ſome ſhews of reaſon in it; But if it be a little narrowly looked into, it will be found to be a fine word, which no body knoweth the meaning of, a thing which looks prettily, but is of no manner of uſe, which very many Perſons do admire, and very few if any at all will in the leaſt endure.

And to make this evident, let us conſider that this Liberty of Conſcience muſt be either limited, or unlimited; If limited, it is by no means to be called Liberty of Conſcience; nay, it is a plain giving up of the Cauſe, for it is an actuall granting, that Conſcience is neither ſo ſacred, nor hath any Right to be looked upon as ſo tender a thing, but that it both may and ought to have bounds and limits ſet unto it; and I believe that there are Few men who are not of this mind, or, if they are not at preſent, a little experience will quickly bring them to be of it.

Now

Now if Conſcience be to be limited, then they who do not like thoſe limits which the Law hath already ſet unto it ſhould do well (when they have obtained lieve for their ſo doing) to propoſe thoſe other Limits which they ſee cauſe to deſire; and after they are agreed themſelves about thoſe Limits, let them in a dutiful manner offer them to their Superiours, alledge their reaſons, and among them, let them by no means omit this one, which they ſo often boaſt of and triumph in, the great numbers, and Quality of thoſe Perſons who are agreed upon thoſe Bounds and Limits, who will acquieſce and reſt ſatisfied in them: And without the doing of this, the Raiſers of all theſe Clamours do nothing elſe but put an intolerable affront upon the Wiſdom and Authority of the Nation, to demand ſo importunately the Alteration of the ſetled Conſtitution, in order to the Gratification of no Body knoweth whom, why, or in what, either how far the Alteration is deſired, or what is deſigned to be the effect of any ſuch

Alteration.

Alteration. Let, I ſay, the Diſſenters, who take themſelves to be conſiderable enough to expect a publick Change for their ſakes, declare concerning Themſelves and their Intentions, We are they who do deſire an Alteration; we do deſire it to be made only thus far, and then we will acquieſce in it, and *in our ſeveral places and Callings* (according to a known reading) will endeavour to make all others to acquieſce in it; and we know, that all the Sober, Serious, Peaceable, Godly, Knowing, Conſcientious Part of the Nation will joyn with us in it.

When the Noiſe-makers have done this, then, and not before, it will be ſeaſonable to harken unto them: Upon theſe Terms, I ſay, and only upon theſe, their Propoſals will be in a condition to be taken into Conſideration: When it is once known what the deſires of any Party are, then there is room for enquiry, whether or no, or how far they carry Reaſon in them. And it may ſometimes ſo chance, that ſuch demands as are not alto-

altogether reaſonable in themſelves, may yet in ſome ſort be thought fit to be complied with in regard of the Number, Quality, Merits or Intereſt of thoſe Perſons who appear to be fond of them. In a Debate about the alteration of a Legal Eſtabliſhment, there are Two things highly conſiderable; 1. The Nature of the Alteration it ſelf; 2. The Nature of thoſe who deſire it, who they are, how many, and what kind of People. Now theſe are things which themſelves alone are qualified to make out unto us; and till they have done that, Authority is ſcarce in a Capacity to concern it ſelf about it: For it can have no Meaſures to take, nor propoſe to it ſelf any End; it can neither know what Conceſſions to make, nor to whom; can have no way the leaſt aſſurance, either what will ſatisfie, or who they are who are to be ſatisfied.

And as for the late device of Comprehenſion, the nature of it is as yet unknown, and he muſt be a bold Man who will undertake for the Event of it. As to that which is by ordinary Perſons

ſons to be underſtood of it, it amounts to no more than a pretty artifice of ſaving the Reputation of about a dozen Perſons, who are ſick of their preſent Separation from the Church, and ſtand in need of a plauſible Pretence under which to return unto it: Their credit will not ſuffer them to renounce their old Principles, and they are weary of ſticking longer to them. Now if the Pride of theſe Men ſhould be thus far gratified, who can ſecure us of any great Effect from it? Will their Hearers imitate their Teachers in their compliance upon theſe Terms or abhorr them for it? And if we had any aſſurance in getting above theſe Difficulties, yet however, as to all thoſe who do not come within the Comprehenſion, every one of all the Pleas of Liberty of Conſcience and Perſecution remain as they were before, ſo that ſuch a Purchaſe will be upon no prudent eſtimate worth the price we pay for it.

Theſe Two things therefore I take to be very clear; Firſt, that Liberty with Bounds and Limits ſet to it, is not Liberty

Liberty of Conſcience : 2. That if any other Bounds and Limits are to be ſet beſides thoſe which the Law hath already ſet, it is very requiſite, indeed neceſſary, that thoſe Limits ſhould be known before admitted, agreed upon among themſelves before they be deſired from their Superiours. But becauſe I very well know that how reaſonable ſoever this way of procedure is in it ſelf, yet that the concerned Gentlemen will find more than a few difficulties in it; I ſhall therefore enquire a little into the other Member of the fore-mentioned Diviſion, and that is, ſuch a Toleration as is unlimited.

And here I do freely confeſs this, that all the Pleas which pretend to ſhew the reaſonableneſs and uſefulneſs of Liberty of Conſcience do plainly prove this, if they do prove any thing at all : And the late Authour *of Humane Reaſon* hath been ſo much honeſter than many of the Writers upon this Argument, that he hath fairly owned the Concluſion which his Premiſes naturally do tend unto. Now

that

that which here doth firſt offer it ſelf to our Conſideration, is this: How it doth come to paſs that in this Part of the Argument the Preſbyterians of late have obſervably been very ſilent? There was a time when in this Caſe their Zeal was as warm as any mans, and nothing in the whole World was in their eſteem more frightful, more intolerable than Toleration. In the year, 1644. This Point of Indulgence was a matter of high Debate, and the Diſſenters from the Presbyterian way did deſire the ſame Liberty from their Impoſitions which they had both of them before joyned in deſiring from the National Settlement; their Pretences were at leaſt equal, they had the ſame natural right to Freedom which any other men had, they had the ſame Pleas of Chriſtian Liberty, and beſides all this they had another very good title upon which they might expect Indulgence from the Presbyterians in Point of Merit; the ſame Arguments the Sectaries ſhewed to be in common between them both, and withall had this to add farther, that their

their Arms added that aſſiſtance, without which the Presbyterians could never have been able to have brought themſelves into a condition, to have enjoyed that Liberty as to themſelves, which the other Sects by their joynt concurrence did put them into a condition to grant, and therefore very well deſerved to have received from them. But in thoſe dayes, their dear Brethren, to whom they were much beholding for their joynt concurrence in Prayers and Arms; their mutual Contributions of Blood and Treaſure, and whom at preſent they ſmile moſt ſweetly upon, did receive the harſheſt uſage which was in their Power to give them, and it was no ſmall matter of publick complaint, that they were not permitted to handle them with much greater roughneſs: To omit many others there then came out a Book entituled, *Wholeſome Severity reconciled with Chriſtian Liberty*, Licenſed by *Ja. Cranford*, wherein we are told, that *Liberty of Hereſie and Schiſm is no part of the Liberty of Conſcience which Chriſt hath purchaſed for us, but that under*

under theſe fair Colours and handſome Pretexts Sectaries infuſe their Poyſon, their Perniciom, God-provoking, Truth-defacing, Church-ruinating and State-ſhaking Toleration.

To which Author I ſhall only add the more *Publick Teſtimony to the Truth of Jeſus Chriſt, and to our Solemn League and Covenant, as alſo againſt the Errours, Hereſies, Blaſphemies of theſe Times, and the Toleration of them, ſubſcribed by the Miniſters of Chriſt within the Province of London, December* 14. 1647. Which I have already mentioned, but in this part of the Argument ſhall inſiſt ſomething more largely upon; becauſe they were ſuch a Body of men as were looked upon as very conſiderable, and ſufficiently qualified to ſpeak the ſence of their whole Party to great advantage: And beſides that ſome of them are yet living and Preachers at this day to the ſeparated Congregations about the Town. Now I would fain know of theſe Gentlemen, whether they are of the ſame Judgment now about Toleration, as they were then? if

they are, then methinks they ſhould do very well to declare it, and ſo much the rather, becauſe that by their behaviour one would gueſs that their minds were altered; in that they do ſo far comply as to joyn Counſels and Intereſts with thoſe whom formerly they bore teſtimony againſt: Again, if they are of the ſame mind about Toleration now as they were formerly; then all the under Sects have great Cauſe in time to beware of them, ought to look upon them as very falſe brethren, who want nothing but opportunity to take away that Liberty which now indeed is common to them with the reſt of their Brethren, but they never intended it for any but themſelves. And on the other ſide, if they are not of the ſame mind about Toleration now as they were formerly; then they ought in all Honeſty to declare to the World how much they were formerly miſtaken, in that they raiſed ſuch fearful Outcries againſt that Toleration which is an innocent and an uſeful thing; the giving of which is (as it

is

is now ſaid) the Duty and Intereſt of all Government, is indeed no other than the permitting to us that Liberty with which Chriſt made us free, or rather, which is the Right of Nature, the Common Birth right of all Mankind.

In the Preface to the aforeſaid Teſtimony they tell us of *the ſpreading Hereſies and curſed Blaſphemies of thoſe Times, which had born down the Authority of the Scriptures and our Solemn League and Covenant* (very fitly joyned:) And then they add, *But above all our Souls are wounded to think with what hope and induſtry, a Toleration of all theſe Evils is endeavoured, and with what a wellcomed boldneſs ſundry odious Hereticks, which in other places have been baniſhed and branded with infamy, do vent their poyſonous Opinions amongſt us; as if they intended to make* England *a common receptacle of all the ſinful Dregs of Foreign Countries as well as former Ages*, pag. 29. *As if all the Errours, Heteſies, Sects, Schiſms, Diviſions, Looſeneſs, Prophaneneſs, and Breach of Covenant among us, were ſmall mat-*

ters; what ſecret and publick Endeavours, Projects, Methods and Practices are there amongſt us to bring in an univerſal, boundleſs, lawleſs, abominable and intolerable Toleration, to the filling up of the meaſure of our Iniquities, and the pulling down God's fierce indignation upon this Nation, and pag. 30. *Inſtead of Unity and Uniformity in Matters of Religion, we are torn in pieces with deſtructive Schiſms, Separations, Diviſions, and Subdiviſions,* &c. *and inſtead of Extirpation of Hereſie, Schiſm, Prophaneneſs, we have ſuch an impudent and general inundation of all theſe Evils, that* Multitudes *are not aſhamed to preſs and plead for a publick, formal, Univerſal Toleration.* And having thus ſhewed how great their Zeal was in this Caſe, I ſhall likewiſe lay down their Reaſons for it, which with great earneſtneſs they did expreſs in theſe following Words, pag. 32. *A publick and a general Toleration will prove an hideous and complexive evil of moſt dangerous and miſchievous Conſequence, if ever (which God forbid) it ſhould be conſented to by Authority,*

rity, for hereby, First, the Glory of the moſt high God, will be laid in the very duſt; Secondly, the Truth of Chriſt, yea all the Fundamentals of Faith will be razed to the very ground; Thirdly, all Chriſt's Ordinances, Offices, Worſhip, Religion, yea and the very Power of Godlineſs will be utterly overthrown; Fourthly, thouſands, and ten thouſands of poor Souls which Chriſt hath ranſomed with his own blood, ſhall be hereby betrayed, ſeduced, and endangered to be undone to all eternity. Fifthly, Magiſtracy and Miniſtry, and with them all Religious, and comely Order in the Church and Commonwealth will be plucked up by the very roots. Sixthly, Reformation in Religion, in Doctrine, Worſhip, Diſcipline and Government ſhall be utterly made voyd. Seventhly, England *ſhall be ſwallowed up with Sects, Schiſms, Diviſions, Diſorders, and Confuſions, and become an odious ſink, and a common receptacle of all the prodigious Errours, Lies, Hereſies, and Blaſphemies, Libertiniſm and Profaneneſs in the World; ſo that* Rome *it ſelf ſhall not be a more odious puddle and cage of all a-*

bominations and uncleanneſſes. Eighthly, the Godly ſhall ſit down and lament among us. Ninethly, the wicked ſhall riſe up and inſult over us. Tenthly, all the Nations about us ſhall be amazed at us. Eleventhly, all the Reformed Churches ſhall be aſhamed to own us, they ſhall all cry out againſt us; Is this England *that Covenanted and ſwore to the moſt High God ſuch a Reformation and Extirpation of Popery, Prelacy, Superſtition, Hereſie, Schiſm, Prophaneneſs, and whatever ſhall be found contrary to ſound Doctrine, and the power of Godlineſs, and after ſo long a travel hath ſhe brought forth an hideous Monſter of Toleration?* And again, pag. 33. *Hath* England *heretofore had ſuch a large ſhare of Goſpel-Enjoyments; and doth ſhe now render to the Lord for all his Benefits a deteſtable Toleration? Doſt thou thus reward the Lord, O fooliſh* England *and unwiſe? Twelfthly, and to conclude, ſeeing we have juſt cauſe to fear, that if this Toleration be entertained among us, the Righteous God of Heaven and Earth will be provoked to plague us yet ſeven times more,*

and

and at last to translate his very Gospel and Kingdom from us unto another Nation: Therefore upon all these Considerations, we the Ministers of Jesus Christ do hereby testifie to all our Flocks, to all the Kingdom, to all the Reformed Churches, as our great dislike of Prelacy, Erastianism, Brownism and Independency; so our utter abhorrency of Anti-Scripturism, Popery, Arrianism, Socinianism, Arminianism, Antinomianism, Anabaptism, Libertinism, and Familism, with all such like, now too rife among us.

It were endless to transcribe all which hath been said by the Presbyterians against Toleration; and therefore it is not a little strange, how much for some years they have endeavoured after it: But sure their separating Brethren cannot be so forgetful of what hath been but so very lately past, as not to cast a very watchful Eye over them, to suspect their kindness, and be hugely jealous of their present Concurrence with them; it being not very credible, that their Moderation is greater than formerly, and that which makes all

the difference is no other thing than this, That their Power is not altogether so great. It hath been no unusual thing in the World for men to unite in their Endeavours in order to very differing Ends; to dissemble for a while their mutual Resentments, and to have less kindness for those very Persons they do cabal with, than for those whom they do cabal against. A Common Interest for a while keeps them close together, and out of that they each hope for their particular Advantages; and both sides hug and applaud inwardly their own Arts and Dexterity, in that they see the way chalked out how they shall be able to supplant their Friends, as well as ruine their Enemies. Thus the Presbyterians may at present joyn their endeavours in attaining that Liberty, which they hope in time to take away, not only from those whom they at present desire to grant it, but likewise from those who now enjoy it together with them: The Independents, Anabaptists, &c. must needs remember how the Presbyterians bore

testimony

teſtimony againſt that Toleration of them which they could not hinder: They could no more endure thoſe who fought on their ſide to diſſent from them, than they could thoſe who fought againſt them. Remember (Gentlemen) you all fought for Liberty of Conſcience; and yet your Fellow-ſoldiers would not allow you that which you ſhed your Blood for, and for their own obtaining of which, they were much more beholding to your Arms than to their own.

The Pretences of all the differing ſorts of Diſſenters are ſo vaſtly diſtant, as to be utterly inconſiſtent; and whatever Correſpondence is between them at preſent, it ought not to be looked upon, either by themſelves or any one elſe, as any Union or Agreement which is of late made between them, but merely as a Combination againſt that Settlement which they are all weary of; and as ſoon as ever that is again overthrown, we ſhall then ſee that all their old Quarrels will return as formerly: The tender Conſciences of divers ſizes will immediatly

mediatly fall as foully upon one another as ever they did: Presbytery will be stiled the Yoke of Antichrist, and Independency the Mother of Confusion; the one will be stiled *Egypt*, and the other, *Babel*.

If any Particular Sect among them doth desire Indulgence, and means nothing else besides a bare Permission to serve God in its own way: If there were nothing else but this in the Case, its Request then would with all Submission be put up single and by it self; that so an account might be taken both of the Principles and of the Persons, how innocent the one, and how peaceable the other; and what Influence either of them are like to have upon the present Settlement either of Church or State: And surely it ought not to be looked upon either as unreasonable or assuming, if the Government doth look upon it self as concerned to have a great regard to it self both in point of Duty and in point of Safety. And in such an Enquiry as this, the Quality, Numbers, and Temper of the Petitioners for such Indulgence

gence are of no ſmall Conſideration. And this way of Procedure, that each ſingle Sect ſhould ſpeak by and for its ſelf, and ſtate its own particular Caſe, is methinks the faireſt Courſe which can be taken; and ſuch a one as thoſe Diſſenters, who are conſcious to themſelves of no ill meaning, ſhould look upon as highly adviſable for their own ſakes: It being very obvious to the moſt ordinary Prudence, that it may be frequently adviſable upon divers particular and material Conſiderations, to indulge ſome kinds of Liberty to ſuch and ſuch ſorts of Diſſenters, which is by no means fit to allow to others; much leſs to allow promiſcuouſly to all. But to take that courſe which they have always done ſince his Majeſties Reſtauration, that they ſhould all joyn in a common Cry, as if they had one common Cauſe, is very ſuſpicious; eſpecially conſidering that they are divided among themſelves in this very point of Liberty of Conſcience, notwithſtanding their Unanimity in calling for it.

Some Rumours have of late been ſpread

ſpread indeed all over the Town concerning ſuch a kind of Comprehenſion as ſhould leave no room for Toleration: how well grounded ſuch Reports have been I will not undertake; it is but in vain to make an uncertain gueſs at what kind of Propoſals may poſſibly be offered by ſome Perſons, and to fancy at all adventures who they are or may be who are in any likelihood to be concluded by them. But becauſe it is ſaid publickly enough and by no mean Perſons, That the Preſbyterians, at leaſt the chief and leading Men among them, are ready now to enter into the Church, upon ſome reaſonable Abatements to be made unto them: And when they are once gained, the other Sects will not be conſiderable enough to expect, that any Toleration ſhould be allowed unto them. If this be the Caſe, as it is by ſome of themſelves pretended to be, then the Caſe is much altered from what it lately was: *Reformed Chriſtianity in its Latitude*, which came out in 1667. and the Defence of it in 1668. are expreſs, not only

only for Comprehenſion but likewiſe for Toleration, and beſides that for a Connivence alſo. And a later Treatiſe entituled, *Indulgence not to be refuſed; Comprehenſion humbly deſired*, which came out 1672. is expreſs for Toleration; and againſt that part of his Deſign he makes this Objection: The Preſbyterians in former times wrote and preached againſt Toleration and Indulgence, and if they do now fall in with it, they contradict themſelves. To this he anſwers, *That ſome did, ſome did not; and there was a Reaſon then which ceaſeth now: and beſides, many of thoſe who declared againſt ſuch a Toleration are dead and gone, and there are others* poſtnati *to thoſe times who now ſuffer*, p. 11, 12. So that it ſeems, theſe Two Advocates for the Comprehenſion were for a Toleration. If the minds of theſe men be changed ſince that time, it were not unfit that they ſhould give Publick notice of it, eſpecially for this Reaſon: It is well known, that in the private Diſcourſes and in their printed Books, the People have been moved to expreſs much pity toward

toward the Diſſenters, and not a few exaſperated againſt the Government by the perpetual noiſe of Perſecution, Liberty, Conſcience, Moderation, Forbearance, Tenderneſs, Compaſſion, Indulgence; and that this hath not been the peculiar Phraſes of ſuch or ſuch a particular Sect, but the common language of all of them. Now if this device of Comprehenſion do take place, then all thoſe Pleas as to all Parties but one will remain as formerly.

But if the Preſbyterians do really intend to come into the Church now, upon ſuch & ſuch abatements to be made unto them, and finally and for ever to ſhake Hands with their old Brethren; it were but reaſonable to expect that they ſhould do theſe two things: Firſt, that in their preſent Meeting-Houſes they ſhould uſe ſo much of the Common-Prayer as they can lawfully, and mean hereafter to uſe, and obſerve ſo many of the Orders and Ceremonies of the Church, as they are perſwaded of the Innocency of; and take the firſt opportunity of declaring to their Hearers their Reſolutions of Conformity, thereby to prepare them to conform like-

likewiſe. Secondly, they ſhould declare, as formerly, againſt Liberty of Conſcience, as a thing which they do by no means approve, and are reſolved never hereafter to have any thing to do with. If, I ſay, theſe men do deſire that any publick diſtinction ſhould be made between them and other Diſſenters, they themſelves ſhould do well to own ſuch a diſtinction; if we go into their Conventicles we cannot find any ſuch great difference in the way of Worſhip between the Preſbyterians and others, as thence to be able to diſtinguiſh them. If we go into their Company their Complaints are much of the ſame ſtrain, and not ſeldom in the ſame Syllables.

If there are any among them (as it is to be hoped there are) who are ſincere, modeſt, and peaceable, who mean better than their Neighbours; The Law cannot help it if they ſuffer for being taken in bad Company: It is not unlikely that they might have fared much better themſelves if they had not had ſuch Partakers; their own Caſe might have been looked upon as pitiable, if they had not joyn-

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ed with ſuch dangerous Adherents. If this Courſe (I ſay) were taken, that each Sect did urge its own Plea ſingle, by and for it ſelf, there were then ſome ground for Charity, and we might poſſibly have ſome hope, that their aims looked no higher than an Indulgence: And by ſo inoffenſive a way of asking favour, Authority would have ſome ground whereupon to be perſwaded, that they would uſe any favour which they could obtain with the very ſame Modeſty with which they do deſire it: But when they ſhall all unite with a joynt Conſent in one and the ſame Clamour for that very Demand, about which themſelves neither ever did, nor ever can agree; and within which Pretence no one name is wide enough to comprehend them, beſides that of Nonconformity, *viz.* Diſſenters from the preſent Conſtitution: Of which diſſent it is more than poſſible to alledge, not only divers, but contrary Reaſons, and doth only tell us what it is they would not have, but not at all what they would have. It is but too evident,

evident, that Indulgence is not the only thing aimed at, but is only propoſed in order to ſomething elſe; and the plauſible name of Conſcience may upon theſe terms be ſuſpected to be only a handſome Artifice whereby to diſguiſe that Combination, which no other word is ſolemn enough to authorize, or of compaſs large enough to be a ſufficient ſhelter for; and by which they hope to become a Match for ſome common Enemy: And accordingly as their ſucceſs doth chance to happen in that, each Sect doth flatter it ſelf with the particular Advantages to be reaped from it. And in this I am the more confirmed, becauſe that the late Act of Parliament againſt Conventicles, which hath been the matter of ſo much Lamentation and Complaint, hath been ſo tender, even of the needleſs Scruples of Conſcience, as to allow theſe men their own Fancies in their way of Worſhip in their own Families, and four of their Neighbours to joyn with them: But theſe Good men are perſecuted, if they are only tolerated; they loſe

their ends unleſs they make Proſelytes, and have opportunities to form themſelves into Parties.

But if this Plea of Conſcience be ſo very Omnipotent, as that it muſt bear all things down before it, and no other Conſideration whatever muſt in the leaſt preſume to ſtand in its way: Suppoſe the Caſe ſhould ſo happen, as that this Plea ſhould become ſo utterly inconſiſtent with it ſelf, as that it is impoſſible but that in one reſpect or other, it muſt neceſſarily be over-ruled; and this is a Caſe which may occurr very frequently: As for Example, ſuppoſe that my Conſcience tells me, that I ought to be of this or that Opinion, and not only ſo, but that I am obliged not only to entertain it my ſelf, but withall to vent and propagate it to others; and on the contrary, the Magiſtrates Conſcience tells him, that he is appointed by God to be a Keeper of both the Tables, and that it is his Duty to take care not only of Peace, but Truth; and the Doctrines which I am ſo very fond of are not only erroneous, but likewiſe

likewiſe of very ill conſequence, both as to the Souls of men and to the publick Peace; and that to ſo high a degree; as that he is firmly perſwaded, and as he really believes and thinks himſelf able to give a very good account upon weighty grounds, that he ſhould be much wanting, both to the Duty which he oweth to God, and the Care which he ought to take of his People, both as to their Temporal and Eternal Welfare, if he doth not make uſe of his Authority in the reſtraining me from venting any ſuch pernicious Doctrines within his Dominions.

What now is to be done in this caſe? My Conſcience tells me, that I am obliged to preach ſuch and ſuch Doctrines, as being precious and ſoul-ſaving ones, the Truths of God and Goſpel-diſcoveries; the King's Conſcience tells him, that they are the Doctrines of Devils (as Saint *Paul* did upon occaſion declare ſome Doctrines to be) and that he ought not to give me Liberty to preach any ſuch in his Kingdom: What now is to be done

in this Caſe? Here is Conſcience on both ſides; the King is as firmly perſwaded as I am, and thinks himſelf as well informed as I either am or can be; If the King reſtrains me from preaching after my own way, then I cry out that he is a Perſecutor: He replies, that I am a Seducer, nay, a Blaſphemer, and he neither will nor ought to ſuffer any ſuch in his Countries; either his Conſcience or mine muſt over-rule; Both cannot be ſatisfied; one or other muſt neceſſarily either yield or alter; or elſe I muſt Preach, and he muſt Puniſh, and the Almighty muſt at his own time be Judge between us; and in the mean time as to all the purpoſes of this World, the King's Conſcience hath reaſon to expect to be more Authoritative than mine, and withall he is concerned to take care both of himſelf and all other men, to Judge both as to his own particular, and likewiſe as to the Concerns of His whole Nation.

If it be replied in this Caſe, that the King's Conſcience ought to yield, becauſe it is an Errour in Him to think that

that He is at all concerned in Points of this Nature; that Religion is no part of His Care, His buſineſs is only to look after the Civil Government, and the Publick Peace (a Pretence frequently inſiſted on:) The Anſwer to this is very plain, and might eaſily be enlarged upon, as to many Particulars, I ſhall only mention theſe two Things; Firſt, that Religion hath a very great influence upon Civil Government, and the Publick Peace; and therefore if ſo be, that the Civil Government and the Publick Peace be within His Care; then Religion ought by no means to be excluded from it, as having ſo great an influence upon it. In the next place, as to the Pretence that the Magiſtrate is in an Errour, if he looks upon himſelf as concerned in this Particular; it is more than poſſible, that that very Pretence will upon Examination appear to be the greater Errour: And in general the Subject is no more free from Errour than the Soveraign. And this need not ſeem News to us of this Age and Nation; and to ſpeak the Truth, it

is no eaſie matter to find out any Age or Nation, where it hath not been ſadly evidenced, that Seducers will quickly be found in great abundance, where Liberty hath been given for the People to be ſeduced by them: And after all this, it will be no impoſſible Task to make out, that Magiſtrates are obliged not only in Intereſt, but likewiſe in point of Conſcience, to have a great Care of Religion; and to uſe that Authority which they received from God, ſo far to the honour of him who gave it, as by no means to ſuffer his Truths to lie all openly expoſed to all the Luſts, Deſigns, and Miſtakes of Men; to all the Knavery and all the Folly of Every one who is either willing to deceive, or liable to be deceived. And of this I ſhall now endeavour to give a brief account both from Reaſon and Scripture, the Neceſſity of the thing, and the Authority both of the Old and New Teſtament.

But here a great many Rubs are thrown in our way, by the fore-mentioned Author *of Liberty of Conſcience upon*

upon its true and proper Grounds aſſerted and vindicated : Proving that no Prince nor State ought by force to compel men to any Part of the Doctrine, Worſhip or Diſcipline of the Goſpel. London, *Printed in the year* 1668. Which methinks is not very different from the Doctrine of the *Blody Tenent* dedicated to both Houſes of Parliament in the year 1644. *It is the Will and Command of God, that (ſince the coming of his Son Jeſus) a Permiſſion of the moſt Paganiſh, Jewiſh, Turkiſh, or Antichriſtian Conſciences and Worſhips be granted to All men in all Nations and Countries.* But whatever the Aſſertion of our Author is either in it ſelf, or in its Conſequence, I ſhall briefly enquire into the Arguments he brings for it. Pag. 25. *That the Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Power are things perfectly in themſelves diſtinct, and ought in their Excerciſe to be kept ſo,* &c. And, *The Magiſtrate hath ways, ſuch as Chriſt thought ſufficient, to promote the Good of Religion, and propagating the Growth of the Goſpel, without drawing the Civil Sword, which will make no more*

Impreſſion in ſpiritual Concerns, than it will do upon a Ghoſt which hath no real Body, &c. And *p.* 28. *To uſe force in Religion is wholly unlawful in any hand whatever; becauſe it is by no means appointed by Chriſt to bring about any Goſpel-End: For the Magiſtrate to enforce the Laws of the Goſpel by Temporal Power, or to compel Men into the Goſpel by ſuch a Power, is to act without the leaſt Precept or Precedent; to induce an Engine to execute the Goſpel contrary to the nature of Chriſts Kingdom (which is not of this World) and contrary to the nature of all Goſpel-inſtitutions. Doth not* Paul *poſitively deliver this, That the weapons of the Goſpel are not carnal but ſpiritual, and mighty thorough God: The Sword of the Spirit is the Weapon by which Chriſt doth all; yea, by which he will deſtroy Antichriſt, the greateſt Goſpel-enemy the World hath produced.* The Sum of which is briefly this: 1. That Force is a very incompetent Method to be uſed in matters of Belief and Perſwaſion: 2. That it is unlawful. 1. Becauſe Chriſt hath no where commanded it, we have neither

ther Precept nor Precedent for it: 2. Becauſe St. *Paul* hath plainly forbid it, where he ſays that *the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.*

Now, as to theſe Suggeſtions which do frequently recurr in this Queſtion, I ſhall at preſent only briefly touch upon them, premiſing this, That our Author, like to all the reſt who have dealt in this Cauſe, is as much concern'd to anſwer theſe and all the reſt of his Arguments againſt uſing the Secular Interpoſition in matters of Belief, as any of thoſe he writes againſt; becauſe he himſelf doth very much approve and commend ſuch Interpoſition where he likes the Cauſe in behalf of which it is made uſe of. Now, though this may ſeem ſtrange, becauſe it is directly contrary to his whole Book, yet it is very plain; and I ſhall not expect to be believed upon my bare word, but deſire the Author himſelf, or any one beſides who makes a doubt of it, to conſider theſe words which we have *pag.* 24. Conſtantine *and the Chriſtian Emperours after him, till the Church of* Rome *had*

had cheated them into ſubjection, took upon them the care and overſight of all Religious things: among our ſelves we reap the advantage of our Kings and Princes care and Concern in that enjoyment we have of the Proteſtant Religion. Now this Aſſertion of that learned Gentleman is evidently true; but then it happens here as it uſeth in the other Diſcourſes for Toleration: When the Evidence of Truth hath forced from them one reaſonable Conceſſion, that one Conceſſion doth plainly give away from them nothing leſs than their whole Cauſe: For, pray tell me, *Conſtantine* and the Chriſtian Empefours are here commended for their care and overſight in Religous things; and ſo our own Kings for ſecuring to us the Proteſtant Religion: Now was not all this done by Laws and Penalties, and the Civil Sword, and was there any poſſibility of having it done any other way?

This being premiſed, as to the Exceptions themſelves, I briefly ſay this; If no force is to be uſed in matters of Religion, becauſe it is an incompe-

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tent Method, as being able to reach only to the Body and Eſtate, but is by much too weak to reach unto the Mind; this is a Difficulty not at all peculiar to the Goſpel, but common to that with all other Diſpenſations. The Mind of a Man was as much a Spirit under the Law as it can be now; and the Sword was made of as meet Matter in thoſe days, as it can be in theſe: and therefore thus far the Caſe is one and the ſame. As to the Second Exception, That all Force is now unlawful, becauſe Chriſt hath not commanded it, they have been told, and have had it proved to them too in many parts of the Puritan Controverſie, that many things are lawful which there is no particular Command for; that a thing becomes unlawful, not by being not commanded, but by being forbidden: And this leads me directly to the Third Exception, That all Force is plainly forbidden by St. *Paul*, when he ſays, 2 *Cor.* 10. *v.* 4. that *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal.* Now this ſaying of the Apoſtle is ſo far from being a

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hibition of all Coercion in the Affairs of Religion, that it doth plainly refer to a very great Coercion, which himſelf did in theſe very words threaten for to uſe, *viz.* the Cenſures of the Church in ſuch a manner as to carry temporal Penalties along with them, in manner miraculous, viſible and extraordinary: And therefore it followeth in the next words, that thoſe Weapons which in themſelves might be ſuppoſed weak, yet if they were better looked into would be found to have a ſtrength from God, which they had not from themſelves; for they were not *meerly carnal, but mighty through God for the bringing down ſtrong holds:* And to render it clear that theſe words have a penal meaning in them, it follows, that theſe Weapons *are able to caſt down imaginations, and every high thought that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the Obedience of Chriſt:* And to put it out of all doubt, that thoſe Weapons had a coercive power in them, the Apoſtle adds,

adds, in a ſtile much beyond exhortation and advice, nay, much beyond a bare reproof, that in the ſtrength of them *he would revenge all diſobedience*. And as for the laſt moſt preſſing and convincing Conſideration, That if Force was to be uſed in any affair of Religion at all, it was of all others the moſt to be juſtified in order to the pulling down of Antichriſt, the greateſt of all other Goſpel-enemies: But even in that Caſe it ought not to be uſed, and therefore moſt certainly not in any other; *The Sword of the Spirit being the only Weapon by which Chriſt will deſtroy Antichriſt, the greateſt Goſpel-enemy which the World hath produced.* I ſhall not here take an advantage which I have already mentioned, that *the Sword of the Spirit* doth in Scripture ſignifie ſomething which carries Coercion along with it; but ſhall be contented that that word be underſtood in the common meaning of it: And upon that Suppoſition I believe that this Aſſertion of this learned Gentleman will ſcarce paſs for true Doctrine in the Separated Congregations

gregations; I am ſure that there was a time when it would not have done ſo, and I never yet heard that in this Point their Minds were altered: How unlawful ſoever it may be for the Magiſtrate to make uſe of the Civil Sword in a Cauſe of Religion; I am ſure that it hath been often preached as a great Goſpel Duty, though in a Rebellion, to make uſe of the Military one. We have not forgot how often the Zeal of the Common People was inflamed againſt the King, by telling them that the Cauſe then fought for was the Cauſe of God, that their Perſons and Eſtates were all too little to be ſacrificed in this Concern of Religion, and the queſtion really was, whether Chriſt or Anti-Chriſt ſhould be King? And ſo I return to our Author.

Amongſt all the Arguments which are brought to prove the Compulſory Power of the Magiſtrate under the Goſpel, the greateſt weight is laid upon the practice of the Kings of Iſrael *and* Judah, *and what they did under the Law in compelling men to the Worſhip of God then eſtabliſhed.*

eſtabliſhed. In the due Conſideration whereof we ſhall find the truth in hand no wayes invalidated, and that what was then done by the Kings of Iſrael *and* Judah, *cannot reaſonably be now made a Rule to Magiſtrates under the Goſpel: And that the Analogy will no way hold, may be made appear both from the different ſtation and poſture thoſe Kings were in from all Magiſtrates now, and alſo from the different Condition of the Church then and now, and many Circumſtances peculiarly relating to both. Firſt, the Worſhip and Policy of the* Jews, *being in it ſelf Typical, and repreſentative of what was to come hereafter, their Government was likewiſe ſo, and in their Kings very eminently. Secondly, God was pleaſed in thoſe Times upon all eminent Occaſions of Reformation in his Worſhip and Proceedings of that Nature to ſend Prophets to declare his poſitive Mind, and to put an end to all Doubts, that could be about ſuch things: Nay, ſome of the Kings themſelves were Prophets immediately inſpired, and did not only take care of the Worſhip eſtabliſhed by* Moſes, *but did themſelves*

themſelves by Divine Authority bring in things of a new Inſtitution into the Worſhip of God. Thus David *did, and* Solomon *in bringing Muſick into the Temple, and ſetling the Courſes of the Prieſts, and were divinely inſpired to write part of the holy Scriptures: No Magiſtrate now can pretend to any ſuch power in themſelves, nor have they any ſuch extraordinary direction to guide them; but are punctually obliged to whatever Chriſt hath revealed in the Goſpel: And therefore in this reſpect the Analogy holds no way good.*

The ſum of all which is, that no Argument ought to be drawn from the Examples of the Kings of *Iſrael* or *Judah*, whereby to prove the Power of any preſent Magiſtrates over the Affairs of Religion; by reaſon of the great difference between thoſe Magiſtrates and ours, eſpecially in theſe two reſpects: Firſt, that they were Typical: Secondly, that in ſuch Caſes they had either Prophets ſent to them, or themſelves were divinely inſpired.

And in this part of the Argument,

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if I had a mind to enlarge farther than I needs muſt, I believe that I ſhould find it an eaſie matter, to find our Authour to have committed ſundry miſtakes in aſſigning the Difference between the State of the Church, and the Condition of Magiſtrates, as it was under the Law; I ſhall not diſpute whether the Lawfulneſs of the Magiſtrate's uſing coercive power under the Law was Typical of this, that ſuch coercive power ſhould not be lawful under the Times of the Goſpel: But in the ſecond place I ſhall venture to ſay this, that ſeveral of the Conſtitutions made by the *Jewiſh* Kings, were ſuch as ſtood in no need either of direction from Prophets commiſſioned for that purpoſe, or any immediate inſpiration given in to them themſelves; And in this Part of the Debate I ſhall go no farther than the Inſtances which our Author here layes down, of bringing Muſick into the Temple, the ſetling of the Prieſts Courſes, Two Things certainly which without inſpiration, common prudence would abundantly

ſerve to aſſiſt any man in: But to ſhew how little need there is to inſiſt upon any thing of this, I ſhall produce an inſtance of the Magiſtrates coercive power in Matters of Religion, which ſhall not be liable to any of all theſe, however frivolous exceptions, as having in it not any thing peculiar to the Ordinances of *Moſes*. And I ſhall fetch it out of the Book of *Job chap.*31.*v.*26,27,28. *If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined, or the Moon walking in brightneſs, and my heart hath been ſecretly enticed, or my mouth hath kiſſed my hand, this alſo were an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judges, &c.* Here now is an offence purely ſpiritual, a Crime meerly againſt Religion, not any otherwiſe at all againſt the State, or any particular Member of it; a ſin indeed it was againſt God, but ſuch an one as did conſiſt in a meer miſtake about him, and ſuch a miſtake as was in that Age and part of the World very frequently committed; and yet it is ſaid to *be an Iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judges.* So that it ſeems in the dayes of *Job*, the Civil

Civil Magiſtrate was thought to have in himſelf a power, and was concerned to look upon it as a Duty incumbent upon himſelf, to take care not only of the ſafety of Himſelf and His People, but likewiſe to look after the Honour of Almighty God.

Now whatever may be pretended for that Natural Liberty, which every man is now a-dayes ſuppoſed to have a full right to, to be permitted the enjoyment of his own way of Worſhip, we do find that things of this Nature were before the Dayes of *Moſes*, and without relation to any of his Laws, under the Reſtraint and Authority of Superiours, who were to be in this as well as in any other Affairs, not only Guides but Governours. I ſuppoſe that without breach of Modeſty, a man may with ſome Confidence affirm, that if it had not been within the due bounds of that Power which of right did belong to *Abraham*, that it would never have been recorded for his everlaſting Honour by God himſelf, *That he would command his Children and Houſhold after*

him to keep the way of the Lord, not only adviſe or exhort , but Command , as we have it , *Gen.* 18. 19. And *Abraham*'s Family was ſo large, as that *Gen.* 23. 6. He is ſtiled *a Mighty Prince.* And in this place we are to conſider that it is very plain, that every one of all thoſe Arguments, which do aſſert Liberty of Conſcience by way of Right ſo far as to exempt Religion from the Authority of the Magiſtrate, doe, at leaſt with equal force exempt it from the Authority of Parents , Maſters, or who ever elſe beſides : For this muſt needs be very evident, that if this Liberty be ſuch a natural indefeaſable right as that no humane power whatever can take it away from us, then as the Regal Power cannot take it away ; ſo for the ſame reaſon neither can the Paternal or Deſpotical : Nay farther, if ſo be that theſe Pretenders are in the Right, and that ſuch a Liberty in Matters of Religion, and the Profeſſion of that Liberty be one part of Liberty , with which Chriſt hath made us free, and which we are accordingly called upon to ſtand faſt

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in, as being purchaſed for us by our Redeemer's Blood, then the ſame Argument doth return upon us again at leaſt with equal, if not with greater force; for as the King ought not to deprive us of any degree of that Liberty with which Chriſt made us free; ſo neither ought any Parent or Maſter preſume to do any ſuch thing; and Liberty of Conſcience muſt upon theſe terms receive as little interruption in Families as in Kingdoms: No impoſition muſt upon theſe terms be endured in any Houſe, School, or Colledge, as to Forms or hours of Prayer, no Words, no nor no Geſtures muſt be preſcribed; every Child or Servant hath the free Liberty to remonſtrate in behalf of this invaluable and frequently inſiſted on Priviledge; that no man muſt dare to determine what Chriſt hath left free, for in Chriſt there is no difference of any Age or Quality, high and low in him are all alike.

The chief, if not only ground of miſtake in this particular is this, that in the New Teſtament we have not an

Example of a Civil Magiſtrate exerciſing his Civil Power in defence of the Goſpel: Now that which renders this Exception utterly inſignificant, is this, that in the New Teſtament we do not read of any Civil Magiſtrate who was a Chriſtian. And nothing can be plainer than this, that the Magiſtrates which then were did look upon Religion as a thing within their Cognizance, and accordingly, as they did not believe the Doctrine of the Goſpel to be true, they did call them to account who did either profeſs or propogate it: And if this had been one alteration which the Goſpel had brought into the World, that from henceforth Religion, contrary to the Sentiments of all former Ages, ſhould be abſolutely exempt from the Cognizance of any Magiſtrate, and that every man's Conſcience was ſo ſacred, as that God alone was fit to be the Judge of it; it is not a little to be wondred at, that in this new *Epocha* and ſtrange alteration of Affairs, the Apoſtles did take no manner of notice of this change, and when they had

had ſo fair Opportunities and proper ſeaſons; as when they themſelves were called in Queſtion about Matters of Religion, did never in the leaſt inſert this in their Apologies, that Religion was no part of the Civil Magiſtrates buſineſs: When St. *Paul* was queſtioned about Hereſie, he made no ſuch exception againſt the Tribunal he was called before; that Hereſie was a thing which they had nothing to do to enquire about, but gave them an Account that the Doctrine which he preached was not Hereſie.

And that we may root up the very Foundation of all miſtakes in this matter, it is very evident, that among all the Precepts, which we meet with in the New Teſtament, concerning Moderation, Condeſcention, bearing with one anothers Infirmities, it is very evident, that not any one of them hath any manner of Relation to our great Idol of Liberty of Conſcience; they being plainly given to private Perſons, & many times in relation only to their own paſſions, and where not ſo limited to certain Caſes, occaſional emergen-

cies, and with a clear reference to their not having as yet time or opportunity of being ſufficiently inſtructed: But as for the Governours of the Church they are ſufficiently called upon to watch over their reſpective Flocks, and to take care that Wolves do not break in upon them, they are called upon to exerciſe the whole power with which they were intruſted, *viz.* the power of Excommunication, a thing which comes ſo near the Queſtion now in Debate, that it was not ſeldom aſſiſted with temporal penalties: And though it is often ſuggeſted into his Argument, that the Outward Sword can act no more upon the mind of men than upon a Ghoſt, yet St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 5. 5. was of the Opinion, that the Deſtruction of the Fleſh (a Phraſe well known to ſignifie Diſeaſes, and ſuch like inflictions on the Body) was a very likely method by which the Spirit might at length come to be ſaved. The Soul and the Body though of a diſtant Nature have ſo near an Union, ſuch Common Intereſts, and ſo great an influence one upon another, that

that what doth affect the one, the other cannot choose but be so far concerned in, as at the least to consider it: And this is obvious to the most ordinary Experience, and hath seldom failed of a great Effect, whenever it hath been made trial of. And if it were not so, it would not only supercede all correction in religious Affairs, but in Civil ones likewise.

Now that any such kind of Liberty of Conscience was brought into the World by the Revelation of the Gospel, as that every one should henceforward without control profess and propagate what Opinion soever he either did really or would pretend to believe, I take to be a thing so far from being according to to the Rule of the New Testament, that I must profess my self to be very much mistaken, if so be that this thing be not contrary not only to some few Texts, but to a considerable part of the whole Design of it. In the 4th of the *Ephes. v.* 14. we read of several Orders and Degrees of Men instituted and appointed for this very purpose,

poſe, that they might take care *of the perfecting the Saints, the work of the Miniſtry, the edifying the Body of Chriſt; that we be henceforth no more Children toſſed to and fro and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the ſlight of men and cunning craftineſs whereby they lie in wait to deceive.* Now is it credible that an unbounded Licence for all manner of Opinions, was ever intended by St. *Paul* to be a thing to be looked upon, as being according to the mind of Chriſt; who tells us of a whole Order of Men appointed by Chriſt, whoſe Duty it ſhould be to take care, that men ſhould not be toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine. And this Conſideration will be of ſo much the greater force both as to the Care which ought to be taken of Souls, and withal as to the Ends of Government, and all the purpoſes of humane Life: If we do but keep in mind the Caution which is here given us by the Apoſtle, that every thing is not Gold that gliſters;

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that fair pretences may have very ill Deſigns lodged under them: The being toſſed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine is it ſelf certainly a very great Evil and of very ill conſequence. But the deluded perſons themſelves have one good Preſervative againſt it, when they are by ſuch an infallible Authority forewarn'd and aſſured, that this doth frequently come to paſs *by the ſlight of men and the cunning craftineſs whereby they lie in wait to deceive:* Now in this Caſe I would appeal to common Senſe, whether it be a thing adviſeable upon the ſcores either of Piety or Prudence, that ſuch deceivers ſhould have an unbounded Liberty, to ſeduce all thoſe whom at any time they ſhall be able to impoſe upon? It is plain that St. *Paul* was ſo far from being of this mind, that he calls upon the Eccleſiaſtical Officers in this caſe to make uſe of the higheſt Cenſures which they were entruſted with, *I wiſh they were cut off that trouble you*, *Gal.* 5. 12. Now I would fain know whether when this which our Apoſtle doth

doth adviſe is done, that according to the Rules of Scripture, any one or more are caſt out of the Communion of the Church upon the account of Corruption either in Doctrine or Manners, it be agreeable to common Senſe, that this Perſon or Perſons, ſo caſt out of the Church according to the Rules above ſuppoſed, ſhould in the ſame Kingdom, nay, in the ſame Pariſh, have a right to ſet up another? that being cut off as a rotten Member from one Church, he may from thence aſſume the Privilege to create himſelf the Paſtour of another, which he no doubt will be forward enough to tell us is a much purer one.

Now the want of exerciſing the Cenſures of the Church in this very Caſe of falſe Doctrine we find to be a thing highly blame-worthy, *Rev.* 2. 14. where it is ſaid to the Angel of the Church of *Pergamus*, *I have a few things againſt thee, becauſe thou haſt them who hold the Doctrine of Balaam*; and Ver. 15. *Thou haſt them who hold the Doctrine of the Nicolaitans*: Now

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the Governour of this Church is not charged in the leaſt that he himſelf did hold theſe falſe Doctrines, but that there are thoſe within his Communion who do hold them; as again the Complaint is renewed, *v.* 20. to another Angel, *I have a few things againſt thee, becauſe thou ſuffereſt that woman Jezebel, which calleth her ſelf a Propheteſs, to teach and ſeduce my ſervants to commit fornication, and to eat things ſacrificed to Idols.* From all which it is very plain, that this Natural or Chriſtian Right of propagating whatever Opinion men do chance, or fancy, or pretend to be of, was a thing which St. *John* was utterly unacquainted with, and blames the Governours of the Church for ſuffering a falſe Propheteſs to teach and ſeduce the Souls committed to their Charge.

And let any reaſonable man conſider with himſelf, whether the condition of the Common people be not lamentably expos'd to innumerable and unaccountable Dangers, if ſo be that by publick Authority they ſhall

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lie expoſed to every one to deceive, who can and will. St. *Paul*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 17. gives us notice of ſome Hereticks of his time, *whoſe words do eat as doth a canker*; he names the Men and the Doctrines, *Hymeneus and Philetus, who ſay that the Reſurrection is paſt already & overthrow the Faith of ſome*: and this Doctrine of theirs by the benefit of Liberty of Conſcience hath been preached ſince their days; and as often ſoever as that time ſhall come which St. *Paul* doth ſo much bewail, 2 *Tim.* 4.3. *That men will not endure ſound Doctrine, but after their own Luſts heap to themſelves teachers, having itching ears.* Authority will be found uſeful as well as Inſtruction, and Government be needful as well as Exhortation.

In the Second Epiſtle of St. *Peter*, *c.* 2. *v.* 1, 2, 3. we read of *falſe Prophets and falſe Teachers who ſhall privily bring in damnable hereſies*; the conſequence of which is there ſaid to be very dreadful both to themſelves and others, *They ſhall bring upon themſelves ſwift deſtruction:* But this is not all, for this kind of infection is not only

only fatal but contagious; as it is expreſſed, *v.* 2. *Many ſhall follow their pernitious ways.* Now if errours are ſo pernicious to the Souls of men, and withal of a very ſpreading nature, is it a thing adviſable that there ſhould be an unbounded Licence for entertaining and receiving, ſpreading and propagating them? And this Conſideration will appear evidently to be the more forcible, if we withal remember, that it is more than poſſible, that Doctrines in themſelves falſe, may be known to be falſe by the men who teach them; and with great art and demureneſs many may endeavour to perſwade others to thoſe things of which themſelves are not really perſwaded. And let no man look upon this as any harſh or uncharitable Cenſure of mine; for it is ſo far from being a ſuggeſtion of mine, that it is in expreſs terms taught by the Apoſtle, *v.* 3. *Thorough covetouſneſs ſhall they with feigned words make merchandiſe of you:* So that Hereſie may be a ſolemn way of ſetting up for a Cheat; Separation a very gain-

gainful Trade; the getting a Meeting-houſe, a religious Method of ſetting up a Shop, where the more numerous and ignorant his Auditors (otherwiſe called his Chapmen) are, ſo much the more it is in his power to put off what Wares he will, and to ſet what prices he pleaſeth upon them.

And thus I think I have made it ſomewhat plain, from the New Teſtament, that that Liberty of Conſcience, which of late hath ſo often been called for, is nothing like any part of that Chriſtian Liberty which the Writers of that Book did ever think of; that they themſelves did exerciſe, and require of others to exerciſe the whole Eccleſiaſtical Power in points of Doctrine as well as Manners; and that was the whole Power they were intruſted with; that this Power of theirs, though in it ſelf wholly ſpiritual, was yet by an immediate interpoſition of God attended upon with Temporal Penalties, and by the Apoſtles known and intended ſo to be. So that in this

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Caſe it happened to them in vindicating their Authority, as it did in another in the exerciſe of their Charity; they could not give the poor man who begged at the Gate of the Temple Money; but they could give him the uſe of his Limbs; they had no Silver nor Gold; but what was much better they had; they could ſay, *Riſe up and walk*: So in this Caſe they had not in thoſe days the Sword of the Magiſtrate; but when it was ſeaſonable they made it evident, that the want of that was abundantly ſupplied by the Sword of God.

Now all this being premiſed, there is very little need certainly for men to require a particular expreſs Precept for the Power of the Civil Magiſtrate in Matters of Religion; ſeing the Authority of the Civil Magiſtrate over the affairs which related to the Worſhip of God was acknowledg'd and exerciſed over all the World; the Original of which practice we find to be of as early Date as Magiſtracy it ſelf. It is notorious, that the

Kingly and the Prieſtly Office was of old in one and the ſame Perſon; and when by the appointment of God, they came to be ſeparated, there is not the leaſt ſhew that this Separation was made out of any favour to Liberty of Conſcience; nor the leaſt inſinuation that holy things ſhould for all Ages and Diſpenſations to come be looked upon as no part of the Princes care: Nay, this is ſo far from being any thing like the Caſe, that in that very Nation, wherein that Separation was made, the Civil Power did all along retain the Right and did frequently uſe that Right of his in interpoſing authoritatively in Religious Affairs: And he did do this both by the appointment of God, and at other times without any eſpecial appointment but by his original Right of Magiſtracy, when there was an Exigency of Affairs which did require it; Nay, and in Matters of outward Order, and the more decent Celebration of Divine Offices, he did not always tie himſelf to the expreſs Rule of the written word, but according

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to his own Prudence; and what he did thus without eſpecial Commiſſion is in Scripture recorded with great approbation. The Inſtances are too well known to ſtand in need of being inſiſted on.

Our forementioned Author tells us, *p.* 13. *That a Magiſtrate, by becoming a Chriſtian, hath no addition of power to what he had before,* which is readily granted him; let him have but ſo much, and he will ſtand in need of no more. They who exempt all Affairs of Religion from the Authority of the Magiſtrate muſt prove that Chriſt did take much from his Authority, *viz.* the whole cognizance of Sacred things, a Power known to have been uſed by Jews as well as Gentiles. And however the Clergy have been frequently and falſly traduced in this particular, that in order to Ends of their own they have flattered Princes with a Power, which really did not belong to them. It is well known that the Writers of Politicks have aſſerted this Prerogative of Princes as earneſtly as the Divines have done:

Inſtances would here be endleſs; I ſhall therefore ſhew you the thing granted by a known Scholar, but no Divine by Profeſſion, and that is the Excellent *Grotius*, *Omnes* (ſaith he) *qui de Republica aliquid lectu dignum ſcripsêre, hoc jus in ſacra non partem ſummi Imperii, ſed etiam potiſſimam atque præcipuam vocant*, de Imperio, C. 1. p. 14.

Now I muſt needs confeſs that our forementioned Author doth, *p.* 22, 23. not only aſſert the Princes Power in Matters of Religion, but proves it very well; and at laſt concludes, that it is a great weakneſs to think otherwiſe: But then he adds, *p.* 24. *That the Prince muſt by no means in this caſe uſe the Sword*; and having ſaid this, he ſeems a little ſuſpicious, as if that Limitation had quite ſpoiled his whole Conceſſion, as indeed it doth. But his wonted courage doth immediately return again; *Nor need it ſeem ſtrange that the Magiſtrate ſhould have the care and overſight of that where he is not to uſe the Temporal Power*, &c. Now, I think, it is not eaſie to be imagined

gined what effectual Care the Magiſtrate can take but that; our Author tells us indeed of another way, *viz. He is to ſee it done by the ſpiritual means which Chriſt hath appointed*, p. 24. But if this be all which he may do, this may be too little: For ſuppoſe thoſe ſpiritual Weapons do meet with ſuch perſons, who do ſlight, undervalue and ſtand in open defiance of them; doth all that concern and care, which our Author, but one page before, aſſerts the Magiſtrate to be intruſted with, in looking after the Honour of God and the Souls of men, amount to no more but barely this, That he is to ſee the Spiritual Cenſures of the Church made uſe of; and if men have no more Religion than to deſpiſe and laugh at them, he is to ſtand ſtill and look on while they are ſo doing? This Learned Gentleman confeſſeth and contends for it, that *the Magiſtrate is in his Station bound to take care of Gods Honour*, p. 23. and yet thoroughout his whole Book he is ever afterward very zealous, that he muſt by no means uſe the Sword

in order to it: Now, how a Magiſtrate can *in his ſtation* act, where this is interdicted him, is a thing not eaſily apprehended. When a Magiſtrate, as ſuch, declares his pleaſure, common Senſe tells us, that the meaning is, that if we do not bear a fitting regard to that his Declaration, it muſt be at our own peril; and without this I do not apprehend how his Authority doth appear to be any greater than that of any other man.

Again, if the King be to govern the People, Religion muſt then be a very conſiderable part of his Care, as being a thing wherein his Government will find it ſelf to be very frequently and very highly concerned; there being nothing more evident nor experienced than this, that according to the right or wrong meaſures which may be taken of Religion, the People may be wrought upon to do either very much good or very much evil, even as to the Affairs of this Life: There are not a few Doctrines, which this Nation is no Stranger to, which if a Prince hath not power

power to forbid the ſpreading of, God ſhall be extreamly diſhonoured, himſelf be in a fair way to be depoſed, and his Subjects ruined; and he ſhall plainly ſee all this, and upon theſe mens terms not in the leaſt be able to help it: And this naturally leads me to our next Conſideration, the many great inconveniencies which attend Liberty of Conſcience both in relation to Religion and Government, the Worſhip of God, and the Publick Peace.

But before I enter upon this Part of the Argument, I muſt again return ſo far back, as to take ſome notice of that common rumour about the Town, of ſuch a Project in hand as will (if the Succeſs can be ſuppoſed to anſwer the great hopes which are conceived of it) make all that Labour needleſs, and that is the fore-mentioned Comprehenſion: In behalf of which the undertakers are ſaid uſually and openly to alledge this, that if that be yielded to, there will be then no need at all of Toleration; for, by that means the Church will be ſo ſtrong by

the acceſſion of her new Friends, that ſhe may ſafely contemn, and by their help eaſily overcome all her other Enemies; and withall they are Perſons already ſo very near us, that there are none but inconſiderable matters in debate between us; for they allow Epiſcopacy, approve the Liturgy, abhor Sacriledge, believe our Articles, and already can and often do communicate in our Publick Worſhip.

Now as plauſible and taking ſoever this Plea is, yet methinks that there is no one part of it which doth not carry ſomething of wonder in it. Firſt, it is well known that there was a time when the Presbyterians did joyn with, invite, encourage, and protect all other Sectaries, that by their Aſſiſtance they might be enabled to ruine the Church; and therefore it ought to be well conſidered upon, by what means it is brought about, that their Minds come now to be ſo far altered as that they will now joyn with the Church in the Suppreſſion of all the other Sects: Nay, and very lately

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the leading Perſons of that way did joyn Intereſts with the Papiſts, and mutually engage for aſſiſtance to each other in ſtopping of Bills in Parliament preparing againſt Both of them.

In the next place, if the difference between us and them are ſo inconſiderable, as they pretend, then ſurely there was no need of the laſt War upon any Religious Account. There was no need of that grievous complaint againſt ſome of thoſe Things which a Preacher at this Day in *Alderſgate-ſtreet* made before a Mock-Parliament, *September* 24. 1656. *Prayſed be that God who hath delivered us from the Impoſition of Prelatical Innovations, Altar-genu-flections, and Cringings with Croſſings, and all that Popiſh Traſh and Trumpery: And truly (I ſpeak no more than what I have often thought and ſaid) the removal of thoſe inſupportable burthens countervails ALL THE BLOOD and treaſure ſhed and ſpent in theſe late Diſtractions (nor did I as yet ever hear of any godly men that deſired, were it poſſible, to purchaſe their Friends or money again at ſo dear a rate, as with the*

the return of theſe, to have thoſe Soul-hurthening Anti-Chriſtian Tokes reimpoſed upon us: And if any ſuch there be I am ſure that that deſire is no part of their godlineſs, and I profeſs my ſelf in that to be none of the number: Here we ſee that Mr. *Jenkin* is very poſitive and expreſs in the Caſe; that the differences are ſo great between us, that all the blood ſhed, whether in the Field or on the Scaffold, was all little enough to be ſhed in order to the removal of ſo great Evils; and yet there was ſhed in this Quarrel the Blood of the King, many of the Nobles and Gentry, & of vaſt numbers of all other Ranks, Orders and Degrees amongſt us: If the Differences between us be ſo inconſiderable, as it is now ſaid, then methinks there was but little cauſe for that great Zeal of Mr. *Calamy*'s, which he expreſt in *Guild-Hall, October 6.* 1643. in order to the perſwading the City unto a liberal Contribution toward bringing in the *Scots*, in order *to the preſervation of the Goſpel*, as he ſeveral times expreſſeth himſelf in that Speech, as if the Differences

ces were in his eſteem, and in the eſteem of that Grave and Reverend Aſſembly of Miniſters there preſent with him, ſo very conſiderable, that the chief concerns of the Goſpel did depend upon them; and accordingly he made uſe of this pretence as his chief Art, whereby to wheedle the City out of their money at that time: *Let me tell you, if ever (Gentlemen) you might uſe this Speech, O happy Penny, you may uſe it now, happy Money that will purchaſe my Goſpel, happy Money that will purchaſe Religion, and purchaſe a Reformation to my Poſterity; O happy Money and bleſſed be God that I have it to lend:* So that it ſeems theſe Gentlemen have two meaſures which upon different occaſions they do make uſe of: When they have a mind to Collogue with Authority, then the differences between them and the regular Clergy are mere trifles and very inconſiderable; but when there is a ſeaſon offered, wherein it is ſafe to animate and inflame the People, then the differences are of that moment, that no Treaſure, no Blood is ſufficient

ent to be laid out in a Debate of that Concernment, or in the Words of the forementioned Speech; *If I had as many lives as I have hairs on my head, I would be willing to ſacrifice all theſe lives in this Cauſe:* Laſtly, if the Differences between us be ſo very ſmall, ſure there can be no great cauſe for their preſent obſtinate Separation.

But if theſe men are really and in good earneſt deſirous of coming into the Church. It is very fit that in order to that they ſhould declare whether they will leave thoſe Principles which have hitherto divided them from it, or whether they are reſolved to entertain thoſe Principles ſtill, or any of them: If they will leave their Principles the Churches Arms are open to receive and to embrace them; but if they mean to retain their Principles, or any of them, their room may be more deſirable than their Company; for upon thoſe terms the difference is in no likelihood to amount to any more than this, that inſtead of remaining in a Schiſm from the Church, they will thereby be in-

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abled to make a Schiſm within it; or if they are at length brought to be perſwaded to part with any of their Principles, will they be ſo Honeſt as to declare that they have been ſo far miſtaken, and deſire their Followers to get out of thoſe Snares which they in former Dayes did lay for them; and particularly will they renounce the Covenant? It was very good Advice which the Right Reverend Father in God the Lord Biſhop of *Winchester* gave His Majeſty, in his Epiſtle before the Coronation Sermon, when he reminded Him of that wiſe Reſolution of His Royal Grandfather, *Henry* the Fourth, *That he was ready at any time to make a Peace with any of the Leaguers, but he would never make any Peace with the League.*

Now if they look upon it as any hard meaſure that they ſhould be called upon to renounce the Covenant: Let them not at all wonder, if the Regular Sons of the Church have not forgot thoſe rigours with which it was impoſed, the many miſchiefs which have been wrought, and

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are ſomething apprehenſive of thoſe miſchiefs which may at this day be wrought by it; if ſo be that the Renunciation of it ſhould be laid aſide; which will certainly be interpreted as at leaſt a tacit Confeſſion, that that Injunction was unreaſonable, and ſuch a one as a man of a tender Conſcience could not ſubmit to; and that is a fair preparation for the Opinion that the Covenant is really a thing which doth oblige us. But becauſe that Moderation is at this time a word much in faſhion; let us compare the Severities uſed in behalf of the Covenant with this which is ſo much complained of as being againſt it: It is indeed, by reaſon of the Clamours by themſelves raiſed about its obligation, eſtabliſhed by a Law, that none ſhall be admitted to Publick Truſts in Univerſities, Schools, or the Church, who will not renounce its Obligation; but the Covenanters did not think this a ſufficient ſecurity in their Caſe; Mr. *Calamy* tells us in his fore-mentioned Speech, in the name of himſelf and the Reverend Miniſters with him, with great

great Joy and Triumph; *That there was not one Perſon in the Kingdom of* Scotland *who is not a Covenanter, and there ſhall not one abide among them who will not take this Covenant.* Now this Mr. *Calamy*, from the beginning of the Long Parliament till the Day of his Death, was a Ringleader of that Party of men who do now plead for Comprehenſion, & do earneſtly at this time deſire that they may be diſpenſed with, for renouncing the Covenant. And if the Counſel of theſe Divines had been of as great Authority in the Army, as it was with the Two Houſes, that which Mr. *Calamy* doth magnifie in *Scotland* would have been a pattern for the ſame courſe to be taken in *England.*

But ſeeing that the Covenant is more ſacred with them than the Oaths of Alleagiance and Supremacy, will they, if they ſhould be thus far condiſcended to, be ſo grateful to His Majeſty as to declare their Opinions againſt the War raiſed againſt His Father? will they in lieu of renouncing the Covenant take an Oath wherein they

they will aſſert, that the War raiſed by ſome Lords and Gentlemen ſitting at *Weſtminſter*, under the Name of the Lords and Commons Aſſembled in Parliament, by a Commiſſion granted to *Robert* Earl of *Eſſex*, was unlawful, as being againſt the known Laws both of God and of the Nation? If they refuſe this, ſeeing that we know that many of theſe very men for whom Comprehenſion is deſired did preach up the War, if they will not declare againſt it, it is ſhrewdly to be ſuſpected that their mind is the ſame as formerly, and the only change which is, is in the poſture of Affairs.

But becauſe it is now ſaid in behalf of theſe men, that they allow Epiſcopacy, and approve of a Liturgy, nay of ours: That we may not be impoſed upon by any ambiguous generality of Words; it is but requiſite that in this they would declare particularly in what ſence it is that they allow and approve both theſe Things; for if by things paſt we may gueſs at things preſent; by Epiſcopacy they may mean but Presbytery; by the Biſhop may

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be underſtood a kind of a Prolocutor. Every aſſuming Presbyter may at any time ſay as one of them lately did, that he is as good a Scripture Biſhop, as he who ſate upon the Bench; or perhaps look upon a Biſhop only as a Civil Officer in order to ſome legal purpoſes: and by a Liturgy they may mean only ſuch a Form of Prayers which may be either uſed or let alone, or rather a thing which is (if ever to be) permitted only to thoſe who are Perſons of ſuch ſmall ſufficiency as not to be able to pray without it, and ſo inſtead of being a Duty is intended meerly as a diſparagement: Or it may be the Common Prayer may be allowed as a way of ſpending the time till the Company is got together, and then comes the Prayer which the Spirit is the immediate Author of, and which alone hath the promiſe of any bleſſing made unto it.

Unleſs, I ſay, that theſe Perſons be required to expreſs their Minds very particularly in theſe and all other Matters of Debate between us, we ſhall be always at a loſs, how much of the

Good Old Cauſe they reſolve to ſtick to; and without ſome ſatisfaction in theſe things we have reaſon to be jealous, that they have, after ſo many other diſappointments, pitched upon this Contrivance, as a very likely one, whereby the Church may, by their admiſſion, become divided againſt it ſelf: The Pulpits may quickly be brought to ſpeak in very different Languages, and the Hearers ſtrangely diſtracted between the ſeveral abettors of the very diſtant Meaſures of the old and new Conformity.

They who have kept out of the Church thus long, rather than they would not have their Wills in ſuch and ſuch Matters in debate between us; it is ſcarce to be hoped, that when they are brought into the Church, by being yielded to in them, that they will not with the ſame Art and Induſtry keep up in the Minds of Men a good opinion of that Cauſe which they have ſo long contended for: At the leaſt they will take what care they can, that thoſe of their former

Hearers

Hearers whom they ſhall be able to bring along with them, (if they ſhall be able to bring any ſtore of their Hearers along with them, which is no ſmall queſtion) ſhall for ever be kept under bondage to every one of all thoſe ſcruples, by which they have been able to retain dominion over them: And they who have all along been, obſervably upon all occaſions, admirably expert at interpreting all things to the utmoſt poſſibilities of all advantage, as to themſelves and their Cauſe, it is not to be expected from them, that they will not interpret this Condeſcention as a complete Juſtification. And unleſs the Modeſty and Gratitude of theſe men be ſtrangely increaſed of late, beyond what it hath uſed to be, our Governours are not like to receive any other return than this; That God hath at length begun to return again, and in ſome ſort to own his People and his Cauſe: He hath now opened the Eyes of the Parliament, and let them ſee their Error in impoſing the renouncing the Covenant; and who knows what

more a gracious God may do for, ſo gracious a People? And that Reputation which hath thus long engaged them to pretend their Cauſe of Separation to be juſt, can do no leſs than continue to engage them to avow its having been neceſſary. So that the Church will by this means be weakned by having one great Security taken from her; thoſe Men will be admitted into her, of whoſe Affections and Deſigns ſhe hath abundant cauſe to be highly jealous; and who, by obtaining their preſent Demands, will, according to their old Cuſtoms, be thereby emboldned with the like reſtleſs importunity to make more demands, and perhaps in a little time be inabled to take what farther they pleaſe, without ſo much as asking it: And by this means the People will become extremely divided, both amongſt themſelves and from the Government. And when that is done, there will be ſo many left out of this Comprehenſion, that the noiſe will not be much leſs than it is already: And whatever acceſſion can be ſuppoſed

poſed to be made to the Church by the coming in of her new Friends, will be more than over-ballanced by the loſs ſhe will receive in the ſtability of her Principles and the Unity of her Children: She will be the leſs able to defend her ſelf againſt the Exceptions of the *Romaniſts*, and be at no ſmall loſs for an anſwer to the Clamours of other Sectaries, who can pretend as great grievances, and alledge as plauſible Reaſons why they ſhould be gratified; ſo that the Work of Coalition (as it is called in the neweſt word) as often ſoever as it is done, will be juſt as often to begin again.

As to any other Particulars of that Comprehenſion which is now ſo much endeavoured, ſeeing they have not thought fit to let us know them, I ſhall not venture to make a gueſs at them, but ſhall go on to another Contrivance, and in the Opinion of many a more promiſing one, and that is, Toleration, which is frequently ſaid to be an Expedient which will gratifie many more, and more Conſiderable

Perſons than can be hoped to be brought within the Compaſs of any one Comprehenſion.

Now it is by no means a thing to be wondred at, if ſo be that the propoſal of Toleration be in it ſelf at the firſt view very plauſible, and in the eyes of very many Perſons exceeding acceptable: It looks like a Privilege which every man hath an intereſt in, which, ſeing it is enjoyed by all alike, no man ſhould take himſelf to have any cauſe to envy it to any other. Now this Liberty of Conſcience, however it hath obtained to be the general Darling, yet, methinks, in the very name there is ſomething which offers it ſelf to our Conſideration, which is at leaſt worth our Enquiry; Whether the very demand doth not carry in it an Exception againſt it ſelf? How doth it appear that Conſcience hath any ſuch abſolute Right to Liberty? Hath it no Rule which it ought to walk by? hath it no obligation to follow any beſides its own Light? If this be not the Caſe, then Liberty and Conſci-

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ence are two words, which are very unfit in great variety of Caſes to be joyned together. I ſhall readily grant, that to act againſt our Conſcience is always a ſin; but then I ſhall add this further, That it is very frequently a grievous ſin to act according to it: Conſcience may in ſome caſes condemn, but there are very many caſes wherein it cannot juſtifie. *I know nothing by my ſelf* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *yet am I not hereby juſtified*; and farther, *I my ſelf thought verily that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jeſus*, &c. The Scripture tells us of *ſeared Conſciences*, *Reprobate Minds*, Men *whoſe minds and Conſciences are defiled*. From all which Expreſſions, it is very clear, That Conſcience is not a ſafe Rule for any man to act by in his private Capacity.

And in the next place, as Conſcience is very far from being a ſafe Rule for any man to act by in his private Capacity; ſo it is by no means adviſable, that men ſhould be ſo far truſted, as to teach according to it in any Publick Places: St. *Paul* aſſures

us, that by this permiſſion dangerous Contentions ſhall ariſe, by reaſon of the perverſeneſs of men, when in the nature of the things there was no real Cauſe for them, 2 *Tim.* 2. 14. *They will ſtrive about words to no purpoſe, to the ſubverſion of the hearers:* And, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. he tells us of *ſeducing ſpirits, who teach the doctrine of devils:* 2 *Tim.* 3. for many Verſes together, he deſcribes a ſort of very wicked men, of whom in the cloſe he gives this Character, That *they have a form of godlineſs, but deny the power thereof; that they creep into houſes and lead captive ſilly women laden with divers luſts:* And again we read of thoſe who *bring in damnable Hereſies*; and again, which directly cometh up to the point in hand about Toleration, *whoſe mouths muſt be ſtopped.* Thus far therefore our way is clear; 1. That according to the Doctrine of the New Teſtament, Conſcience is not its own Rule, is not entirely left to it ſelf in its own way of acting: 2. That thoſe who are allowed to be publick Preachers are not to be intruſted with an abſolute

abſolute Liberty of propagating whatever Opinions themſelves either really are, or ſhall pretend to be of; of which I have already ſpoke, and therefore ſhall add no more upon that point beſides the laying down ſome of the many Inconveniencies which will unavoidably ariſe upon the granting of any ſuch Liberty in theſe Two Reſpects, 1. Of Religion, 2. Of Government.

Firſt, as to Religion; and here the Caſe is very clear, that ſuch a Liberty is the moſt ready way in the World to make Religion weak and deſpicable, by being crumbled into an unaccountable and every day encreaſing variety of Sects and Schiſms: What one other Contrivance can poſſibly be thought upon, whereby to expoſe Religion to the frequent and ſeemingly juſt ſcorn of Unbelievers than this? That it ſhould by publick Authority be openly expoſed to all manner of ridiculous and incongruous pretences unto it, to all kinds of dotage and impoſture, to all the folly and all the falſeneſs which is to be met with among

mong the ſons of men: That every one who hath but a Freak in his Brain ſhall have free Liberty, if he pleaſeth, to Chriſten it a motion of the Spirit, and every humour though never ſo unheard of and extravagant, ſhall have by Law a Priviledge (if it will but claim it) to recommend its ſelf as a degree of further Light: Here we ſhall ſee men ſhaking all day, as if the Spirit came to them in Convulſions, and as the humour increaſeth we ſhall ſee them run naked about the Streets, as if with the Old Man, they had put off all degrees of Modeſty: The Scripture ſhall be frequently ſo interpreted, as that no man in his Wits can poſſibly underſtand it, it both hath and may be allegorized ſo far as to leave no manner of Sence or Truth in any one Word of all the Hiſtory of it; its Laws may be ſo commented upon, as to carry in them no manner of Obligation: Among our ſelves the Family of Love had gotten a Fancy that Chriſt was not any one Perſon, but a quality whereof many are partakers, that to be raiſed is nothing elſe,

elſe, but to be regenerated or endued with the ſaid Quality, and the ſeparation from them which have it, and them which have it not, is Judgment: Now where ever this Liberty is indulged, the Grand and concerning Articles of our Faith, our Saviours taking Humane Nature upon him, the Reſurrection from the Dead, and the laſt Judgment, are all given away in Exchange for two or three fanciful Expreſſions. The Hiſtory of the Creation hath of old been made but an Allegory; the Garden of *Eden* a fine Trope; it is to little purpoſe to alledge that with equal Reaſon it might be ſaid, that by the whole Race of mankind was not to be underſtood any real Beings, but only ſo many handſome Figures, and by the Univerſe is not to be underſtood a Creation, but a Strain of Wit, for Reaſon in ſuch like Caſes will be no more harkned to, than Scripture: So likewiſe it hath been taught, that Chriſt ſhall deſcend from Heaven in a Metaphor, and we be catched up into the Air in a Moral way; The New Heavens and the New Earth

Earth are nothing elſe but the World changed by their Example into their Opinions: And if this Liberty be allowed, all Miracles and all Myſteries will be quickly changed into ſo many Whimſies; for what is it which ſelf-conceit cannot inſpire, or madneſs prove, or that man admit, who cares not to know what himſelf means; or whether he doth or not, if he be once got under the plauſible ſhelter of Liberty of Conſcience himſelf, what is it that he may not impoſe upon vaſt multitudes, who though never ſo well meaning in themſelves, are yet liable to be overreached by the Arts of other men: The dangers of this kind are not poſſible to be reckoned, becauſe they encreaſe and vary at their own pleaſure; neither is there any man living, who can poſſibly tell us how many and how groſs abſurdities ſuch a Liberty as this may bring into the Nation in the very next moment.

This very Deviſe of Liberty of Conſcience, which many, who look upon themſelves as wiſe men and no ill Chriſtians, are fond of, is the very

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ſame, by which one of its ſhrewdeſt Adverſaries did hope to drive Chriſtianity out of the World, and that too by its own aſſiſtance; and to that end he granted a promiſcuous Liberty for all diſſenting Chriſtians to enjoy the publick exerciſe of their ſeveral ways, in hopes thereby to engage one of them againſt another, and by that means to make his advantage upon all of them: For ſo we read of *Julian*, that when his long contrived project of reſtoring Heatheniſm began to be put in effectual execution, that this was the Courſe which he pitched upon, as that which was moſt likely to bring his Deſign about, to grant Liberty of Conſcience to all diſſenting Chriſtians, as *Ammianus Marcellinus* hath it *Lib.* 22. *Utque diſpoſitorum roboraret effectum, diſſidentes Chriſtianorum Antiſtites cum plebe diſciſſâ in palatium intromiſſos monebat, ut civilibus Diſcordiis conſopitis quiſque nullo vetante religioni ſuæ ſerviret intrepidus:* Here was a man very tender of Conſciences, but what think we was his Reaſon for all this Indulgence and Mode-

Moderation, we may read it in the next Words, *Quod agebat ideo obſtinatè, ut diſſentiones augente Licentiâ non timeret, unanimantem poſtea plebem nullas infeſtas hominibus beſtias ut ſunt ſibi ferales plerique Chriſtianorum expertus.* This wiſe and ſubtle Adverſary knew very well that this was a ready way to deſtroy Chriſtianity, to give a free Liberty and a full opportunity for every one who pleaſed to divide it: So that this ſage Contrivance of ours is but the Chriſtianity of an Heathen, the taking up the *Moderate Counſels* of a profeſt Apoſtate; and our Wiſdom in preſerving Religion doth expreſs it ſelf in thoſe very ways, by which as wiſe men as our ſelves have thought the ready way to overthrow it. Indeed it is hardly credible, that any Perſon who underſtands Humane Nature, who conſiders how many are its Weakneſſes, and how violent its Paſſions, who is a Judge of Conſequences, or hath at all obſerved the courſe of Affairs, can in the leaſt be fond of any ſuch device as this kind of Liberty, who hath

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not within himſelf a very great Deſign againſt the preſent Religion of that Kingdom where he doth propoſe it. But, alas! that is but a ſmall part of this evil, even our common Chriſtianity will be hard put to it, if it muſt wreſtle with all the difficulties which Toleration will immediately bring upon it: That Faith is in no great likelihood of remaining long pure and ſound, which is expoſed to whoſoever pleaſeth to corrupt and to defile it

There is one Principle well known amongſt us, which where-ever it is admitted, there is no Doctrine of Faith whatever, nor Rule of good Life which can be able to ſtand before it, and that is the Doctrine of New Light or private Illumination: This is an Evil which cannot be watched with too much Care, becauſe it always hath it in its own Power to occaſion how many and what kinds of miſchief ſoever it ſelf pleaſeth; and withall it is with great eaſe pretended to by every one who will; and there are every day to be met with

with too many perſons too readily diſpoſed to be impoſed upon by ſuch pretences. Some Romaniſts have with great ſcorn inſulted over the Reformation, upon the account that this evil hath made a ſhift to creep into it; whereas this is a difficulty which all Religions are liable to be abuſed by; a folly with which the Church of *Rome* doth exceedingly abound, and to which ſhe is indebted for ſome of her chief Orders, as being plainly founded in it. The Quakers in *England* are neither more ridiculous, nor as yet ſo impious as the *Alumbrados* were in *Spain*, nor do the blaſphemous Phrenzies of *David George* exceed thoſe of *Evangelium Æternum*. This is an ill Weed which will grow in all Soils, and ſpread exceedingly; and Infallibility it ſelf is but an equal Plea, and therefore is, upon ſuch occaſions, glad to call in to its aſſiſtance its Temporal Advantages. This very Pretence doth ſcarce leave a man within the poſſibility of being confuted; what Authority is there to be produced which is fit to come in competition

petition with this Perſwaſion, That I have an immediate ſuggeſtion from the holy Ghoſt: The Scripture it ſelf hath but one and the ſame Original, and is of an elder Date, and, if I pleaſe, is as imperfect in reſpect of my Revelation, as that of *Moſes* was in reſpect of that of Chriſt. This Evil is liable to to be as endleſs as Thought or Art can make it, as boundleſs as Imagination, and hath as great variety of ſhapes to appear in, as there are poſſibilities in the World for any man to be either willing to deceive or liable to be deceived.

What a fatal Influence the now contended for Liberty of Conſcience had upon the moſt conſiderable Articles of Religion, within a ſmall compaſs of time, we may learn from the forementioned Teſtimony of the *London*, and the Atteſtation of the *Cheſhire*-Miniſters. I ſhall ſet down ſome of the Articles againſt which thoſe Errors were, but will not defile my Paper with the Errours themſelves. Againſt *the Divine Authority of holy Scriptures*; againſt *the Nature and Ef-*

ſence; againſt *the Being of any God*; againſt *Chriſt as Mediator*; againſt *the Obligation of the Moral Law*; againſt *Ordinances*; againſt *Lawful Oaths*, againſt *the future State of Mens Souls after this Life, denying the Immortality of them.* But beſides Religion, ſuch a Liberty will be quickly found to have a ſad Influence upon Government and the publick Peace.

And as this ſort of Liberty will expoſe Truth to perpetual and unavoidable Dangers, and withal hath left it no poſſibility of a ſufficient Defence againſt them; ſo it hath a natural tendency towards deſtroying the publick Peace: And not only ſo, but to the diſturbance of all Societies, and even of every private Family. Opinions have a great Influence upon Actions, and engage men not only upon good, but upon very bad practices. He who is allowed to raiſe a Sect, hath a very fair opportunity put into his hands of making himſelf the Head of it, as being ſuch a Party; and by being permitted to have their Conſciences, will have but

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too many opportunities of having their Perſons and Purſes at his diſpoſal likewiſe. Hence it is, that though ſome Princes have been ſometimes forced to ſuffer Diſſenters from the eſtabliſhed Profeſſion (by reaſon that they were ſo numerous, or ſo ſubtil, that they could not go about to ſuppreſs them without diſcovering how unable they were to do ſo;) yet they always looked upon ſuch Diſſenters as the next door to Enemies; and accordingly had a perpetual Eye and Guard upon them, as thoſe who of all other were the moſt likely to be the Authors or occaſion of the next diſturbance. It is a great miſtake, though it be often found amongſt the greateſt Perſons, That Sects are things fit only to be deſpiſed, becauſe that men of Parts and Fortune are neither eaſily nor uſually ſeduced by them: but it ought likewiſe to be conſidered, that Ambition, Revenge, Covetouſneſs, Humour and Diſcontent may engage thoſe who are not in earneſt themſelves ſeduced, to appear in all ſeeming earneſt to ſeduce others. I ſhall

readily grant, that both the Beginning and the greateſt Growth of Sects are amongſt the meaneſt people, thoſe whoſe Fortunes are as low as their Underſtandings; but then they do not ſtay altogether among them, but ſpread farther; like a Peſtilence, which may begin in an obſcure Alley, but in a little time no part of the City or Kingdom may be free from it. Beſides, are not the Vulgar People the hands, the Tools, the Inſtruments which the Greateſt muſt always make uſe of? And is it not known by frequent experience, that a Deception once got among them, may by a little Connivence thrive ſo far, as to be able to diſpute for Superiority, and inſtead of demanding an Indulgence, refuſe to give one? And, by how much the ordinary ſorts of people are leſs Maſters of Reaſon than others, with ſo much the greater eaſe they may be wrought upon to engage in thoſe Courſes; which by men who underſtood better, would be looked upon as evidently unreaſonable. Now this is an Error which hath been frequent-

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ly committed by wiſe men in great places: They look upon the Errors and Follies which the common People are drawn into, as things very fit to be indulged, as being only ſo many occaſions for themſelves to droll upon; but by their ſo doing they have often found the return, which *Abner* did of ſporting himſelf with Lives, as theſe mighty Sages do with Lives and Souls, 2 *Sam.* 2. 14. *Let the young men ariſe and play before us*; but with him they are at laſt convinced, that, Ver. 26. it is *bitterneſs in the latter end.*

The ſafety of all Government doth depend upon this, that it is certainly ſtronger than each ſingle perſon, and in taking care of this, That as to any kinds of Union or joyning Forces together, that there may be no ſuch things but under the guidance of the Magiſtrate, and by his appointment; & ſo long as this is taken effectual care of, though the diſcontented perſons be never ſo many, yet becauſe they have no way of uniting; they are but ſo many ſingle perſons, ſcattered,

weak and insignificant, having no opportunities of any Common Council, they can never joyn in any Common Design. But let them once have but so much as *any one Phrase* to know one another by, any *setled place* for their constant Meetings, and *a set* and *known company* for them to meet with, and *any Bond whatever* which doth unite them, and they presently become a distinct People, and begin to be dangerous, as having an Interest, Counsels and Body of their own, which the Government is not manager of, not privy to, but shall quickly find it self highly concerned by all means to provide against.

Let it once be permitted to crafty, active, talking, lying and designing men, to instil into the minds of all sorts of People, the necessity, usefulness, piety, or rare excellency of any one thing or Contrivance whatever, beyond that which the present Laws and establishment doth provide for; and is not here a most readily prepared matter for any bold *Boutefeu* to work upon, who will take upon him to help

help the Nation immediately to ſo fine a thing? Hath not any ſuch Undertaker a vaſt and already formed Party in all Parts of the Kingdom? Let him but repreſent to them, that the preſent Government is the only rub in their way, between them and their ſo fancied happineſs; and is it not very likely that this will be the very next Conſequent Reſolution; let us remove that Obſtacle, ſo publick a good is much to be preferred before any particular Form or Family; the welfare of the Nation is the great End, and Governours themſelves were created but in order to that, and conſequently are to ceaſe as often as that End can be better attained without them.

Though the pretence be nothing but Conſcience, yet every diſcontent will joyn to make the Cry both loud and general. Schiſms do of themſelves naturally grow into Parties, and, beſides, are moſt plauſible Occaſions for any elſe to joyn unto them; the gathered Churches are moſt excellent Materials to raiſe new Troops

out of, and when they are thus far prepared, they are eaſily perſwaded to be at the Service of any one who will attempt to lead them on.

If all men were wiſe and honeſt, if every one underſtood well, and would act accordingly; upon that Suppoſition Conſcience might have a much greater truſt repoſed in it than can be now adviſeable: And if we could flatter our ſelves ſo far as to take that to be the Caſe, this would no more ſuperſede the neceſſity of the coercive power of Laws in Religious matters, than it would upon the ſame grounds ſuperſede it in Civil ones. For no Laws which ever were or can be in the World can poſſibly provide in any Degree for thoſe large meaſures of Juſtice, Equity, Mercy, and all kinds of fair dealing, which would infallibly every where be met with, if all men did take Care to keep a good Conſcience; Truth, Juſtice, Temperance, *&c.* are things which every man's Conſcience doth and muſt needs tell him that he is obliged to, yet were it not for fear of the Law, we ſhould find

find that Conſcience is not alone to be truſted in theſe which are her Natural and familiar Ojects: And this is a thing ſo known and granted on all hands, that it is not uſual with men in their dealings among one another to truſt purely, in matters of any moment, to one anothers Conſcience. And ſeeing we acknowledge that Conſcience may ſo often prevaricate in theſe plain and obvious things, where ſhe is ſo eaſily found out; we have no great cauſe to truſt to her fidelity, that ſhe will not alſo diſſemble in thoſe things which are more remote and obſcure, and hidden from the very beſt of our diſcovery. Let thoſe therefore, who plead for Liberty of Conſcience, conſider; that there are two ſorts of men, which ought to be provided againſt, to keep this contrivance of theirs from being abſolutely the moſt ſenceleſs and dangerous in the whole World; and upon their Grounds it doth not appear to be ſo much as poſſible to provide againſt them: Firſt, thoſe who are not honeſt, and theſe may pretend Conſcience

ence if they will, and in that Caſe Religion and Government, Truth and Peace are like to be moſt admirably ſecured, when they are authoritatively permitted to the arbitrary Management of every deſigning Atheiſt, who will but take upon him to be an Enthuſiaſt: And in the ſecond place, as all men are not honeſt, ſo all men are not wiſe, and as the former ſort may pretend Conſcience, ſo the latter are perpetually liable to be impoſed upon by the innumerable, however abſurd pretences unto it: Thoſe Laws are not fitted for the Temper of this World, which are made upon this ſuppoſition, that every one who looks demurely is preſently in good earneſt, that men ſay nothing but what they think; let us but conſider that it is very poſſible for men to perſonate, and then we ſhall not be very eager to deſire a general Licenſe for every one who hath a mind to become a publick Cheat.

And then from theſe diverſities of Judgments, and many times when they are only different forms of ſpeaking, there

there will immediately ariſe great Diſtances of Affection: *For theſe Diviſions, of Reuben there will be great thoughts of heart, ſurmizings, cenſures, jealouſies, raylings, evil ſpeaking, animoſities, peeviſhneſs, malice, perverſe diſputings, & every evil way:* Each Congregation will have at leaſt ſome one little Propoſition peculiar to its ſelf, which all its Proſelytes muſt be known by, which all their Thoughts muſt be perpetually running upon, & every one elſe muſt be called upon to come up to: the ſmalleſt gathered Church cannot hold its Members together, unleſs it hath ſome particular thing to engage them upon, & to have them known by, for they cannot with any face ſeparate from all mankind, but they muſt have ſomething to ſay for it.

This contrivance however it be abſurd and dangerous will notwithſtanding that, have alwayes many who will be very fond of it; for it is a moſt ready way for every forward Fellow to think himſelf ſome body, becauſe he hath adopted himſelf into ſuch a Sect; and then the next thing which he is to think upon is to try if he can improve

improve the Notion a little farther; for if ſo, he ſhall be the more taken notice of: And if he finds that his addition is but a little taking, he will then forſake his Maſters, to ſet up for himſelf, divide from that Church of which he hath been long a precious Member to gather a purer of his own. And ſo his New Light will ſerve moſt bravely for himſelf to ſhine in.

But if this had been a new and unheard of Invention, the Contrivers might then have been allowed to entertain vaſt hopes of it; but alas, it hath been often tryed, and hath alwayes brought Confuſion along with it: And is it to be wondred at, that in variety of Worſhips the one doth look upon the other as erroneous, and perhaps impious? And then how lamentably muſt that City be divided whoſe Inhabitants think themſelves bound, as they love God to hate one another; and it hath been often ſeen, that a Common Enemy hath crept in at theſe inteſtine Diviſions, and deſtroyed both, while the one, by reaſon of different Communions, did not enough

enough care to help the other.

Be our apprehenſions about divine Matters never ſo different, I grant that we ought not for the ſake of them to be wanting in the common Duties of Humanity to one another, or in our mutual Endeavours after the publick Good. I readily grant, that to be wanting in our aſſiſtance in either of theſe Caſes, is a great error; but alaſs! it is too general an one, and Law-makers are to conſider not only what men ought, but what they uſe to do. Why ſhall I fight (ſaith one) for a Prince who is an Idolater? and why ſhould I (ſaith another) take any care to relieve that City which is only a Bundle of Schiſmaticks, the greateſt part whereof are in my eſteem Blaſphemers likewiſe? *Jeroboam* underſtood this very well, he did not caſt off the true God, but only ſet up another way of Worſhip, as eaſily concluding that by perſwading them to be of another Religion, he ſhould eaſily keep them to be another Kingdom; when their Faiths were once divided, the Nations would never

never care to unite again.

And pray, tell me, what ſhall a Prince do in that Caſe, where are diverſe ways of Worſhip allowed and frequented in the ſame Nation? Shall he diſcountenance the Profeſſors of any one, by keeping them out of all Office and Employment? If ſo, he diſobligeth that whole Profeſſion, loſeth ſo many hearts; who ſure will think themſelves to be very hardly dealt with, in that they are diſreſpected only out of their zeal for God, and becauſe they follow the beſt of their Light. And what are they like to think of ſuch a State, which doth refuſe to employ them meerly upon this account, becauſe they have tender Conſciences, and dare not be preſent where the Goſpel is defiled by a profane mixture of humane Inventions? Or, Secondly, ſhall the Prince carry himſelf equally and indifferently towards all Perſwaſions, countenance and prefer them all alike? This can hardly be, becauſe that he himſelf muſt be of ſome one, and that will think it ſelf not fairly dealt with,

if

if it have not ſome preeminence: And when he endeavours to ſhew himſelf indifferent to all Perſwaſions, there will enough be immediatly ready to give it out, that he makes uſe of all Religions for his own ends, but himſelf is really of none; and ſo perpaps none of them will be really for him: And thus by endeavouring to diſpleaſe neither Party, he ſhall certainly diſpleaſe them both, at leaſt the Zealots of all ſides will repreſent him at the beſt as one lukewarm, and as ſuch, only fit to be ſpit out of all their Mouths.

Men may talk of their fine projects as long as they pleaſe; but ſurely where the Church is already ſo ſettled, as that it hath a great dependance upon the Government, and the Government hath a ſtanding Influence upon that, thoſe Politicks muſt needs be very ſtrange, which go about to alter or unſettle or put any check upon ſuch a Conſtitution: And in oppoſition to a *Clergy* thus regulated, it is no kindneſs ſure to the Monarchy, to go about to ſet up ſuch a *Miniſtry*

as

as depends purely upon the People: And when the whole Method of the Preachers Maintenance and Reputation muſt conſiſt in the various Arts by which he can either guide or follow the ſeveral Humours of each of his Congregation; no man can tell what it is poſſible for a good Craſtsmaſter to perſwade the Multitude unto.

But this Danger, how great and plain ſoever it be, yet in the opinion of the great Promoters of this deſired Eccleſiaſtical Confuſion, is ſo far from being looked upon as any Inconvenience, that it is in all likelihood the true and real and only Reaſon which makes them to be ſo very fond of it, to deſire it with ſo great earneſtneſs, and never to be put off by never ſo many denials and diſappointments. The Church is one great rub in their way between them and the Crown; and therefore becauſe they find that they cannot directly demand the preſent removal of it, they have bethought themſelves of two plauſible Methods whereby to prepare the

way

way for doing it another time: First, to open the door to let the Churches old Enemies in upon her, and for all the care which shall be taken to give them Liberty, to bring their old Enmities along with them; and by that means the Church will be not only weakned, by being divided within her self, but besides there will be a part of her self always ready to betray her, and give her up. One sort of the Projectors desire only thus much, and that will satisfie them: Another sort there are, who think it not sufficient that the Church be only weakned within, unless there be a free Liberty for whosoever pleaseth to train up as many as he can prevail with to come and learn of them the several ways by which the Church, when occasion offers it self, may be set upon from without: And it is well known, that these Gentlemen are not unacquainted with new Models of Civil as well as Ecclesiastical Administration.

And having thus pointed at some few of the innumerable Inconveniences of Toleration, I shall add once

more, that ſome care ought to be taken of the preſent Device of Comprehenſion; that if it be thought fit to be granted, it may be upon this Condition, That all who receive benefit by it, ſhould be obliged publickly before their Congregations to declare their Approbation of the Liturgy, in a Form to be appointed by Authority for that purpoſe, and to renew that Declaration on certain Days to be likewiſe appointed, and to read the Common Prayer themſelves, and not to leave it always to mean Perſons, who ſhall only be appointed to ſlubber it over, to ſpend the time till the Company is got together; and then one of the Precious Men ſhall come and put himſelf in all the moſt ſolemn Poſtures imaginable, and in fact ſay to the People (as Dr. *Heylin's* Chamber-fellow was ſerved after a ſhort Grace) *Dearly Beloved, let us praiſe God better*: And withal, that Security ſhould be taken, That this Conformity of theirs be not uſed merely as an Expedient to keep them in publick Employment; that ſo they

may

may be the more ready, when opportunity offers it self, to assist Providence in carrying on the great Work of a thorough Reformation. And this Advice is by no means to be despised, as a thing perfectly needless, because that as great a Conformity as for ought appears is now intended, hath been formerly advised and submitted to upon this very account, to prepare Matters the better for an intended Change. This Mr. *Calamy* (in his Apology against Mr. *Burton*, 1646 quoted in the Collection called *Evangelium Armatum*, p. 47.) alledgeth for himself to have been one of his own old Arts: *As for the Service-book, let Mr.* Burton *know, that at a meeting at my House, it was resolved by above a hundred Ministers, after a long debate, upon divers weighty Considerations, That all that could in their Judgments submit to the reading of some part of it, should be entreated for a while to continue so to do. To this our dissenting Brethren then present did agree, and one of them made a Speech to manifest his Concordance. This is e-*

nough to give any man ſatisfaction for the late laying it down. And proportionably to this, it is a thing well known, that ſome very well affected to the Good Old Cauſe, do for all that conform to the uſe of the Ceremonies of the Church, under the ſanctified Excuſe of *ſubmitting to them as Burthens.* Now theſe, I think, are competent fore-warnings to Authority to take care to ſecure it ſelf againſt any ill uſe which is poſſible to be made of any abatements towards that ſort of People, who in this very Caſe do profeſs themſelves to act without ſincerity, and to make uſe of all the Arts which they can think of.

And in the next place their great earneſtneſs in deſiring to be diſpenſed with for renouncing the Covenant, doth in them plainly ſhew a very great fondneſs remaining toward it, and if yielded to, would in Authority appear more than a tacit Confeſſion, that it had hitherto been to blame in its Zeal againſt it. Their reſtleſneſs in this is not to be wondred at, becauſe they are ſworn *never to be wrought over*

over to an Indifferency or detestable Neutrality: But that Authority should be wrought over to shew kindness to such a Combination against it self, or that any should propose it to the old Cavaliers to give leave to their old Persecutors to believe themselves under the Oath of God, *to bring every one of them to condign punishment*, is a thing which may justly raise all mens wonder.

I confess indeed, that by the last Bill of Comprehension it was provided (and so perhaps it may in this) That no man should dare to say, that the Covenant doth oblige under such a Penalty, *&c.* But it is much to be doubted that such a Provision may not be sufficient; for let us consider this one thing: Those Persons, concerning whom our present Debate is, are such as are to be entrusted to be Guides of Consciences, and if this Renunciation be once taken off, then they have Liberty enough to insist upon the Obligation of the Covenant amongst their Confidents, without coming within the

danger of the Law. Let us remember that the Holy League in *France* was taken by above half the Kingdom, before the King did ever ſo much as hear of it.

But, to make this Matter plain, I ſhall propoſe a Caſe very like it in our own Kingdom. Suppoſe that any man out of the great Tenderneſs which he pretends to have for the Conſciences of Men, ſhould propoſe that the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy ſhould be by Act of Parliament taken away, upon this very pretence, That Oaths are not to be multiplied but upon great neceſſity; that the Conſciences of Men are nice and tender things, and ought not to be diſquieted by being pried into; and diſputable Points of Government are not fit matters to be put into an Oath: Ought not ſuch a Perſon to be looked upon with a very jealous Eye, as being ill affected to his Majeſties Perſon, his Crown and Dignity? He himſelf and all his Favourers will, no doubt, reply, no; becauſe he doth at the ſame time offer a Security in it

ſelf

ſelf as Good and more fit to be taken, and that is this, That it ſhall be very puniſhable for any man to ſay, *That our Soveraign Lord King* Charles *is not lawful and rightful King of theſe Realms*, &c. *and that the Pope hath any Power or Authority to depoſe the King*, &c. He, I ſay, who ſhould propoſe this Alteration, ought in all reaſon to be looked upon as a better Subject to the Pope than to the King. And ſo likewiſe, and for the ſame Reaſon, thoſe, who with ſo great Eagerneſs and Importunity have ſo often endeavoured the taking away the Renunciation of the Covenant, ought to be very much ſuſpected, leſt they have in their Eye ſomething which is of much higher Conſideration with them, than either the Settlement of the Church or the ſafety of his Majeſty.

It now remains that I conſider the great Objections which are urged againſt all which is already ſaid, which are theſe, That Comprehenſion, ſay ſome, others Toleration, others both, are fit to be granted; 1. By reaſon

of the great Numbers who do desire it; Secondly, in respect of their great Merit, they being Persons in whom doth consist a great part of the Sobriety, Industry, Frugality and Wisdom of the Nation, and particularly the Presbyterians have deserved well of His Majesty. Thirdly, it is very adviseable to grant a Liberty at this time to these Persons by reason of the great assistance which they are able to afford us against Popery; and Fourthly, that if a Liberty be not given, it will be a very great Inconvenience to *Trade*. Fifthly, Toleration of several Forms of Religion, is a thing which we may see a good effect of among our Neighbours in *France* and *Holland*: Lastly, Civil Penalties are of no use in Religion, but only to make Hypocrites. To all which pretences I return this.

First, that the Numbers of these men are not in any degree so great as they do pretend; It is indeed one of their great and old Arts to make all the shew they can possibly, and to boast of those Numbers which they cannot shew; one who is as well acquainted with

with the Muſter Rolls of theſe Parties as any man, doth plead for an Indulgence by this very Argument, that they are not ſo conſiderable as that any danger needed to be feared from them. *Peace-offering*, p. 8. *What are we that Publick Diſturbance ſhould be feared from us, nec ponderа rerum nec momenta ſumus; by what way or means, were we never ſo deſirous, could we contribute any thing thereunto? What Deſigns are we capable of? &c.* So that it ſeems this is an Argument which they can either uſe or lay aſide, as occaſion offers it ſelf: They can either wheedle Authority into pity and forbearance upon the account that they are ſo inconſiderable, as that no danger can poſſibly be feared from them; Or otherwiſe they can Hector Authority, as being ſo conſiderable, as that there is no danger ſo great, but if they are diſobliged, it may reaſonably be feared from them.

In the ſecond Place, is it any wonder that theſe men do appear in ſome Numbers, conſidering how eaſily many honeſt well-meaning Perſons may be

be ſeduced by the Zeal and vehemence of ſome who are ſeduced themſelves, and the various Arts of others whoſe great deſign is to ſeduce as many as they can poſſibly: And again, are there not ſome Remainders of the Old Army yet alive, Committee-men, Sequeſtrators, Purchaſers of Crown and Church Lands, and otherwiſe intereſted in the late Rebellion? beſides vaſt Multitudes of the Common People depending on them, who muſt needs be glad of ſo many Solemn Occaſions of meeting one another, by which they keep up their Acquaintance and Correſpondence, and put a very ſerious face upon their *good old Cauſe*, and find many opportunities to be mutually ſerviceable to one another in their private Affairs, and of joyning Counſels againſt the Publick. And do they not breed up their Children and Relations in the very ſame Principles with themſelves? Now the greater Numbers there are of ſuch People ſo much the greater care there ought to be taken that they be not permitted to meet together. The

Meeting-place is very well fitted for a Religious Rendevouz, and the Spiritual Master of the Camp may not only deliver out his Orders at the same time with, but may stamp upon them the Authority of the Oracles of God.

But in the next Place, if the Government would please but to own it self, the Numbers of these men would presently appear to be very inconsiderable; and this hath no oftner been tryed than it hath been found to have been accompanied with good effect. In Queen *Elizabeths* Dayes, these mens Predecessours were very troublesome, made great noise with their great Numbers, and the great dangers which would arise by disobliging them; and they had some great Favourers in Court upon some accounts, which were not very Religious; but when by reason of their Insolent Provocation in the Year 1588. When the Queen was in all her Fears from the *Spanish Armado*, and in a condition; as they thought to deny them Nothing; they so far provoked Her, as to alie-

nate

nate Her Mind for ever from them: Their boasted of Numbers did immediately abate, and the Laws were immediately submitted to, as soon as ever they did perceive that it was but in vain to think of longer trifling with them: So likewise it hapned in King *James* His Dayes, their loud Clamours were presently silenced, as soon as ever the King declared Himself resolute at the Conference at *Hampton-Court*: Nor would the Act of Uniformity have had any less effect, if it had not been accompanied with a general Discourse at the same time of a Toleration to follow immediately upon it. And I appeal to the Consciences of several of the Preachers in the Separated Congregations, whether they did not leave their Livings upon this very hope, which without it they would have never done?

Besides, the Numbers of the Dissenters ought by no means to be looked upon, as an Argument for Toleration by any, because, it is not looked upon as such by themselves: This very Point being a thing about which themselves

themſelves are highly divided, and would by no means if they could help it grant to one another.

But beſides their Numbers, they are now to be conſidered in point of Merit; but this is a part of the Argument in which I do delight ſo very little, as that I muſt gratifie my own temper ſo far, as to ſay very little in it. The Faults of other men are things which I by no means delight to dwell upon, even when it is neceſſary, I take it to be very irkſome: As they are particular Perſons, I have nothing to ſay to any one of them, and whatever Degrees any of them have attained to in Piety and Virtue, in any kind of Intellectual, Moral, and Religious Accompliſhments, I pray God that they may every day increaſe more and more in them, and that both here and hereafter they may receive the comfort and reward of whatever is truly good in them. But as they are a Party, I take it to be very clear, that their Merit hath not been very great, either to the Crown or Nation, and in this it were eaſie

to

to be very large, for one who delights in that which to me is a very ungrateful Employment. In the Hiſtories of Queen *Elizabeth*, King *James*, King *Charles* the Firſt; there is too much to be found on this Argument, and His Majeſty which now is, when He was in the Hands of theſe men, what Uſage He did receive from them, though His Royal Clemency hath been graciouſly pleaſed to pardon, yet His Loyal Subjects have not quite forgot it.

As to the next Pretence, that it is adviſeable to grant theſe men an Indulgence at this time, by reaſon of the great aſſiſtance which they are able to afford us againſt Popery: This is ſuch an Objection which the Regular Sons of the Church will ſcarce be able to refrain themſelves from looking upon without ſome Indignation: The Writings of the Biſhops and Epiſcopal Divines have hitherto been had in great Eſteem over all the Reformation; no men thought to have had a better Cauſe to defend; no men looked upon as better able to defend it:

it: Not to mention the many Worthies in Queen *Elizabeth*, and King *James* His Dayes, whoſe Names are, both at home and abroad, had in great and deſerved Honour: I ſhall only mention ſome few who ſince the beginning of the preſent Controverſie have wrote againſt the Puritans as well as Papiſts, and accordingly have fell under the Indignation of both Parties, *viz.* Arch-Biſhop *Laud*, Arch-Biſhop *Bramhal*, Biſhop *Taylor*, Doctor *Hammond*, and Mr. *Chillingworth*. How many Ages will the Non-conformiſts take to breed up a man equal to any one of theſe? Biſhop *Sanderſon*, a Perſon of known Learning and Judgment, in a Preface to a Body of Sermons, Printed ſome Years before His Majeſties Return, takes occaſion to declare his Opinion concerning the Controverſie between the Church of *England*, and Church of *Rome*, as it uſeth to be handled by the Non-Conformiſts; his Words are theſe: *That they preach againſt Popery, I not at all miſlike, only I could wiſh that theſe two Cautions were better obſerved*

ſerved than (as far as I can conjecture of the Reſt by the proportion of what hath come to my Knowledge) I fear they uſually are by the more zealous of that Party: Firſt, that they do not through Ignorance, Prejudice, or Precipitancy, call that Popery which is not, and then under that name and notion preach againſt it; and then Secondly, that they would do it with leſs noyſe and more weight, &c. Now it is well known, that Biſhop *Sanderſon* was a Perſon of great Learning and Judgment, and withall a Perſon of very great Humility and Modeſty, and who did very little delight in undervaluing the meaneſt Perſon living; and yet he expreſſeth his Thoughts concerning the Writings of the Non-Conformiſts againſt the Church of *Rome*, to be liable to theſe two not inconſiderable Defects: Firſt, that they did not underſtand the Queſtion; Secondly, that they did not know how to pitch upon ſuch Arguments as were fit to be made uſe of. And withall ſome Pages afterwards he adds this, *That even in theſe times of great Diſtraction, and*

conſequently

Consequently thereunto of so great advantage for the Factors for Rome, *none have stept into the Gap more readily, nor appeared in the face of the Enemy more openly, nor maintained the Fight with more stoutness and gallantry than the Episcopal Divines have done, as their late Learned Writings testifie: yea and some of them such (as beside their other sufferings) have layen as deep under the suspicion of being Popishly affected as any other of their Brethren whatsoever: That by the Endeavours of these Episcopal Divines some that were bred Papists have been gained to our Church, others that began to waver, confirmed and settled in their Old Religion, and some that were fallen from us recovered and reduced, notwithstanding all the disadvantages of these confused Times; and of each of these I am able to produce some Instances. But I profess sincerely, as in the presence of God, and before the World, that I have not known (at least I cannot call to remembrance) so much as one single Example of any of this done by any of our Anti-Ceremonian Brethren, whether Presby-*

terian or Independent.

Now whether our ſeparating Brethren have been improved in their Abilities, or have been more fortunate in their ſucceſſes in their diſputings with the Romaniſts ſince that time, it lies upon them to make out; I am ſure that the Writings of the moſt eminent Perſons now among them were then extant: Since which time there hath indeed appeared a Body of Sermons, being the united Labours of ſundry of them, but of any Miracles which either have or are likely to be wrought by them, the World both is, and it is to be feared will be for ever ſilent.

If therefore we take theſe men into the Church, our Church will be ſo much the leſs defenſible, as having admitted into it Perſons whoſe Principles are no way juſtifiable; and withal with expreſs leave not to renounce the moſt unjuſtifiable of all their Principles. And for their Aſſiſtance againſt the Romaniſts, it doth not as yet appear, that it will be ſo valuable as to countervail the Advantage

tage we ſhall give the Church of *Rome* by taking theſe into our Church. If we ſuffer them to remain in Bodies diſtinct from the Church, then the Romaniſts have an Advantage, if they pleaſe to uſe it, to take up what diſguiſe themſelves ſhall ſuppoſe to be fitteſt for them. How eaſie a thing is it for a Prieſt to ſet up for a gifted Brother! And what one Opinion is there imaginable, which may not be brought in under the pretence of a farther degree of New Light? Whether all the ſtories be true of Friars who have preached in Meeting-houſes, I have not had an opportunity of being ſo well informed, as to venture to ſay any thing; but I am ſure, if they will, they have there fair opportunities offered: And if it be not as yet ſeaſonable to ſet up directly for their own Church, they may however prepare the way by pulling down of ours.

And notwithſtanding all the Zeal which the Non-conformiſts do declare againſt Popery, it is well known that they know very well how to

joyn both Counſels and Arms together: The leading Men of both Parties in *Ireland* were wonderfully great together, all the while that the Deſign was managing againſt my Lord of *Strafford*; and here in *England*, in the Declaration which the King ſet forth concerning the Succeſs of the Battel at *Edge-hill* on *October* 23. 1643. He hath left this Memorial to all Poſterity; *All men know the great numbers of Papiſts which ſerve in their Armies, Commanders and others; the great Induſtry they have uſed to corrupt the Loyalty and Affection of all our loving Subjects of that Religion; the PRIVATE PROMISES and UNDERTAKINGS THAT THET HAVE MADE TO THEM, that if they would aſſiſt them againſt Us, ALL THE LAWS MADE IN THEIR PREJUDICE SHOULD BE REPEALED, &c.*

As to the next Objection, That the ſuppreſſing of Conventicles will be a great hindrance to Trade: I muſt needs confeſs that this is a thing which would have great weight, if it had any truth in it. That Trade is a thing

thing of great and general Concern, is ſo plain and confeſſed a thing, as that there is no need of ſpending many words whereby to prove it: Our wiſeſt Kings have always thought themſelves concerned to make Laws and all manner of proviſions whereby to promote and encourage it; and there is ſcarce any man ſo mean, but that he doth in one degree or other receive ſome benefit by our Commerce with other Nations. Not to enter into particulars, I ſhall only name one, which is indeed the Meaſure of all the reſt, and that is Money; which is not a thing of our own Growth, but it is a thing without which thoſe things which are of our own Growth, cannot without great difficulty paſs from one hand to another. Our Ships are our Bulwarks, nay, they are more than ſo; for they not only keep other Nations from coming to us, but they carry us to them: They make the Sea to be our Earth, the whole World to be as it were our native Soil, by bringing home to our doors whatſoever groweth in a-

ny Corner of the Universe. It was Trade which brought *Tyre* to be called *The City of Joy, the crowning City, whose Merchants were Princes, and whose Traffickers the honourable of the earth*, Esay 22. 7, 8. It was by the benefit of Trade that this City is again said *to have heaped up silver as dust, and fine Gold as mire in the streets*, Zech. 9. 3. It is absolutely necessary for us, if we will be secure of our own Land, to keep up a proportionable strength at Sea. And besides this necessity in point of Safety, it brings innumerable advantages in point of improvement; carrying from us our own Commodities which we can spare from our own use, and in return bringing us whatsoever the World doth afford, for Use, Delight, Strength or Ornament. It is a thing by which vast multitudes do alone subsist and altogether depend upon, which great numbers do thrive and flourish by; by which his Majesty hath a brave Addition to his Revenue, and every man besides doth in his degree find many comforts and con-

conveniencies in his way of Living: It is the great Employer and Rewarder of all ſorts of Ingenuity and of Induſtry; by means whereof we every day ſee men advanced to Wealth and Honour, to live comfortably to themſelves, and with great benefit to their Country. It is a thing in it ſelf clear, that Trade is very highly and univerſally beneficial, and thoſe who are but ordinarily verſed in it are able to reckon many admirable Advantages which I cannot ſo much as think upon. It remains now that I enquire whether there be any ſuch Inconſiſtency between Trade and Uniformity in Religion, as is generally (though without any Ground which I could ever hear) pretended? Theſe Two things have in their nature no manner of Repugnancy, and if there be any Repugnancy between them, it doth not proceed from them themſelves, but from ſomething elſe, which it is to be hoped may be removed, and neither of theſe Two things the worſe for the removal of it; and what that is I ſhall now enquire.

It is well known that this Argument from Trade hath been uſed in former days, when there was no manner of occaſion for it; but however it ſerved as a pretence, whereby to amuſe the People, and make them clamour againſt the Government. I inſtance in the Caſe of my Lord of *Strafford*: What a noiſe was raiſed all over the Town, that there could be no Trade in the Kingdom till Execution was done upon him: And whoſoever raiſeth any ſuch Cry ſhall have always ſome ready to joyn with him in it, becauſe there will be always thoſe who will want Trade: And let him but tell them that the Court and the Biſhops are the only Cauſes of this their want, and it is no wonder if they cry out with the loudeſt, Down with them, down with them to the ground. Indeed if the Biſhops in *England* did pretend to the ſame Power with the Preſbyteries in *Scotland*, then indeed it might ſo happen that the Traders might have ſome cauſe to be jealous of them; for thoſe Gentlemen did at the Aſ-

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ſembly at *Glaſcow*, 1638. paſs an Act concerning Salmon-fiſhing; another about Salt-pans, *Roger L' Eſtrange*, *p.* 330. By Act of Aſſembly at *Dundee* 1592. they prohibited all Trading with any of the King of *Spain*'s Dominions, and they put down the *Munday*-market at *Edinburgh*, *Spotſwood*, *p.* 393, 394. But in this Caſe the Shoo-makers thought fit to aſſert their Chriſtian Liberty againſt the Impoſitions of the Preſbytery, and tumultuouſly gathered together, and threatned to chaſe the Miniſters out of Town; upon which the Market continued: Which, as that grave Hiſtorian tells us, did cauſe much ſport at Court, where it was ſaid, *That Raſculs and Sontars could obtain at the Miniſtens hands what the King could not in Matters morereaſonable.*

That Trading hath, ever ſince the Reſtauration of his Majeſty, been very high, notwithſtanding the many complaints about it, it is very evident to any man who is never ſo little acquainted with the Cuſtom-houſe; but that it hath not anſwered to the height

height of all mens hopes, is not to be wondred at, if we conſider ſome things which have hapned, which the Act of Uniformity was no way concerned in: Firſt, there was a War with *France* and *Holland*, by which it was not to be avoided, but that many Merchants muſt needs become very great Sufferers: Secondly, At the very ſame time there was a raging Plague, not only in *London* but in moſt of the other Trading places of the Nation; which did not only ſweep away great numbers of our Trading People, but may eaſily be ſuppoſed to have had an unhappy influence upon Trade it ſelf: Thirdly, To accompany theſe Two great difficulties there came a dreadful Fire, the loſs by which is ineſtimable: And Fourthly, there hath been a Second Dutch War. Now there are none of all theſe things can happen to a Nation, but Trade muſt unavoidably ſuffer by, and feel it; and then the wonder will be very little if we conſider that we have ſuffered by them all. And theſe are things ſo publickly known, that it is

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to be admired, that men ſhould have the confidence to take no notice of any one of them; but if they hear of any Difficulties which the Trading People do wreſtle with, preſently overlook all theſe notorious Cauſes, and enter into long Harangues about Common Prayer and Ceremonies. I may add that beſides the fore-mentioned Calamities; If we are out-done in point of Trade by our Neighbours in *Holland*, it is not to be wondered at, if we conſider the Nature of our Country, and the Manners of our People.

Our Country hath in it ſelf a great plenty of all things neceſſary for the life of men, which *Holland* hath not; they muſt trade or they cannot live, which is not our Caſe: And if neceſſity makes men expert, and their being expert brings them to thrive; it is not to be wondred at: It is this very neceſſity which every day makes vaſt Numbers among them, glad to ſubmit to all the Labours & Hazards of all the Seas in the World, & all this purely to ſupport their Lives with very courſe fare, and very ſmall wages; now the goodneſs of

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our Country affording to our People a more comfortable ſubſiſtence upon much eaſier terms than is to be had among them, is one plain cauſe why our People are not eaſily to be brought to take that pains, run into thoſe dangers and ſubmit to thoſe ſevere terms, which with them is not leſs than abſolutely neceſſary: Not to ſay any thing of the return of their long Voyages, what vaſt advantages do they make by Fiſhing upon our own Coaſts, which we alwayes complain of, but will by no means betake our ſelves unto. Again he who hath got a vaſt ſum of money by trading, hath here in *England* a perpetual conveniency of purchaſing Land with it, and by that means he himſelf or his Son doth become a Country Gentleman, which in *Holland* is not to be done; by which means Trade is amongſt us given over, when men come to be Maſters of ſuch great ſums of Money as to be beſt able to command it, and to reap the moſt conſiderable advantages by it: In *Holland* becauſe Trade is the thing which every one is to truſt to, their Wives and Children

Children are all inſtructed in the Myſteries, and inured to the buſineſs of it, and ſo the Stock and Experience of a Family deſcends from Father to the Son, and increaſeth from Generation to Generation: Now it is far from being a Miracle, that their Merchants ſhould be able to out-do ours, who are frequently left by their Parents as large or larger ſums of Money to begin with, as ours take themſelves to be very well ſatisfied with and give over: They go on and improve what we look upon as more adviſeable barely to enjoy, and by that means prevent an increaſe which would have come eaſily, and too often waſte and conſume what they in a few Years are by reaſon of their great Stocks inabled without difficulty to treble. And beſides that different way of diſpoſure of the plenty of the Rich which is between them and us: They make another and greater advantage of the neceſſities of the Poor, than we either do or can do, or it is fit for us to do: They make their People to work harder, fare harder than any of ours will do,

do, to take ſmaller wages, and by that means they are ſomething helped in being able to under-ſell us: And beſides the Maſters of Trade do themſelves live much more frugally than we do in point of Dyet and Apparel, and other heights of living, and ſtudiouſly avoid many unneceſſary ways of Expence, which we are (perhaps too apt) to be fond of. And whatever is expended muſt needs take off ſo much from Improvement; which Conſideration prevails with them to be very ſparing till they are very Rich, and not to pretend to any of the wayes of Vanity, till they have brought themſelves into a condition to carry on their material Concerns with the beſt advantage. Now is it any wonder, if there were nothing more in the Caſe than this, that in Trade they ſhould much out-do us? And there is little doubt to be made of it, that he who is better acquainted with that People than I am, will be able to reckon many other particular things wherein they differ from us in order to this great Deſign, which

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have no manner of relation to Liberty of Conſcience, and which would have the ſame effect without it, as they can poſſibly have by it.

As to our ſelves and our preſent Caſe, there are but three Things (which I can learn) pretended, by reaſon of which it is poſſible to be ſuppoſed, that the putting the Act againſt Conventicles in Execution can draw any prejudice upon Trade: Firſt, that Merchants who are not willing to conform, will not come over and ſettle in *England*: Secondly, that the moſt eminent Traders being Nonconformiſts, they will either forbear Trading to the utter undoing of all ſuch Workmen (as Weavers, *&c.*) who do depend upon them, or leave the Kingdom and carry their profitable Trades along with them; which will bring a great decay of Trade here, and carry away that benefit, which *England* might have received, to that, whatever Country they ſhall pleaſe to ſettle in.

Thirdly, That Merchants beyond Sea (as *Roman* Catholicks, *&c.*) will not

not be eaſily perſwaded to truſt their Eſtates in the hands of thoſe who are not of their own Religion, and they who are, being lyable to ſuch Proſecutions as by our Laws they are liable unto, will be fearful of having any Eſtates in their own hands, and look upon it as more adviſeable to forbear Trading, rather than to be liable to ſo many Difficulties; Theſe are the three moſt conſiderable Objections which I have hitherto been able to meet with, and to each of theſe I have this to offer by way of return.

As to the firſt, that this ſeverity will diſcourage Forraign Merchants from comming over to us: It is a miſtake to think that the Church of *England* is ſuch a Bug bear to the reſt of the Reformation, as that the Religion of that is looked upon as ſufficient Cauſe to hinder any great Numbers of valuable Perſons from coming over to dwell in the Nation. It is by no means clear that any ſtore of them do at this time deſire to tranſplant hither, and if they did, it is more than poſſible that ſome other of

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our Civil Conſtitutions may be greater bars in their way, than the Act againſt Conventicles, and particularly the want of a Regiſter: And that Perſon muſt have more than ordinary Intelligence, who can be able to ſecure us, that there are ſuch Numbers of conſiderable Merchants at this time deſigning to come over, and are diverted only by the News of the Bill againſt Conventicles going to be put into Execution; as that the advantage and addition of thoſe Perſons, and that Trade to the Nation ſhould be ſo great, as to overbalance thoſe many and unavoidable Inconveniencies which I have already ſhewed, that Religion and Government muſt be expoſed to, by the grant of Liberty of Conſcience. It doth not remain in our Memories that in *Cromwel's* time, when there was Liberty given to all except Papiſts and Prelatiſts, that any were by that Liberty encouraged to come over, at leaſt not any ſuch number as to be conſiderable. But ſuppoſe it ſhould ſo happen, that ſome Eminent Mer-

chants ſhould deſign to come over; I could never yet hear, nor am I wiſe enough to think upon any reaſon, why the Act againſt Conventicles ſhould more fright them from *England*, than the Inquiſition doth from other Countries, as *Spain*, *Italy*, and *Portugal*; and yet in thoſe Countries Merchants have their Factories, and drive their greateſt Trade: Beſides ſtrangers Merchants have as much encouragement in this particular, as can reaſonably be deſired; the *French* have their Church, the *Dutch* theirs; nay, even the *Jews* have theirs, and all Aliens of the Reformation have even by the very Act of Uniformity an expreſs proviſion made for them, as to the enjoyment of their own way of Worſhip at the pleaſure of His Majeſty; and if they do meet and keep to their own Language, they need fear no more in this Country than in any other.

As to the ſecond Thing alledged, that if the Act againſt Conventicles be put in Execution, the moſt Eminent Traders being Non-Conformiſts, they will leave off Trading, and by that

that means undo all ſorts of Workmen who do depend upon them, and not only ſo, but leave the Nation, and carry their Trades away along with them.

Now that this is a thing of more Noiſe than Weight, will appear if we examine it with a little Care. That ſome eminent Merchants are Nonconformiſts is undoubtedly True; but that the moſt eminent are ſo, I am ſure is not true, and could eaſily make it appear, if it were fit to mention the Names of particular Perſons: But ſo far as it is true, doth any man in his wits imagine, that the Act againſt Conventicles will make them either quit their profitable Trades, or fright them out of the Kingdom? It doth neither condemn them to be hanged nor burned, neither doth it ſo much as touch their Perſons or Eſtates for being Non-conformiſts, but permits them to be of what Religion they pleaſe, and alloweth them the free exerciſe of their Religion in their Families: It cannot therefore be eaſily imagined, that People will be

ſo far out of their wits (though I muſt confeſs that Fanaticiſm will go a great way toward putting them out of them) as to leave their ſettled and profitable Trades, their Native Country, Relations and Friends, only becauſe they cannot publickly ſhew the exerciſe of their Mode of Worſhip; whereas they may freely enjoy it in their own Families, and be known to do ſo, without the leaſt interruption in any of the forementioned Conveniencies: : Eſpecially conſidering, that Merchants of that Eminency, that their Caſe deſerves to be taken notice of in a caſe of this Publick concern now under debate, are very well able to keep Miniſters in their own Houſes, and may do it with far leſs charge and prejudice, than either going into ſome other Countrey, or the forbearance of their Trades will put them to. But I ſhall for once ſuppoſe two Things, whereof the firſt is evidently not true; the ſecond not at all likely, That the moſt Eminent Merchants are Non-Conformiſts, and that upon that account they will forbear

Trading:

Trading: But even upon theſe Terms it is to be hoped that thoſe they deal with will not be utterly undone, whatever may be pretended: For put the Caſe that three or four of the moſt Eminent Merchants ſhould dy, or (which I wiſh did never happen) break; every dayes experience ſhews us, that the Clothiers they deal with, and conſequently the Weavers, and other Workmen depending upon them, are not preſently ruined, or ſo much as out of employment, but do immediately find other Merchants to deal with; the Trades of thoſe who either give over Trading, or dy, being alwayes continued by their Sons, or Partners, or ſhared amongſt thoſe who have been their Servants, or other Merchants who deal in the ſame Commodity, and to the ſame Places. But ſuppoſe that the putting the Laws in Execution ſhould ſo far diſtract any Numbers, as to make them run out of the Kingdom: Let it be conſidered whither they will run, only into *Holland*, where they cannot more freely enjoy the exerciſe of their Religion in

their own Families, nor converſe more freely with one another about it, than they may do here in *England*. All the difference is, that here they cannot meet in great Numbers, and I leave it even to the Non-Conformiſts themſelves to Judge, whether that one Conveniency of Meeting in great Numbers be a ſufficient enticement to any rational man to exchange *England* for *Holland?*

But put the Caſe, that they do go into *Holland*, or into ſome other Country; I did never yet meet with any man who could demonſtrate to me how they could carry away their Trade of Merchandizing, though they were never ſo willing; live in *Holland* they may, and drive their uſual Trades here in *England* by their Correſpondents, in which Caſe the Nation will only looſe the common profit of their eating, drinking and wearing: But to carry away the Trade of the Nation with them, is not poſſible, if they leave any Merchants behind, as I am ſure they will many more, and more conſiderable than any who will go away; and

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by withdrawing themſelves into other Countries, they will but leave their Trades to be ſhared amongſt better men and better Subjects; ſo that by leaving the Kingdom, inſtead of prejudicing, they would occaſion a very great bleſſing unto it, by carrying away with them the Diviſions, but not at all the Trade of the Nation.

When the Act againſt Conventicles was firſt made, this Argument againſt it from Trade was much inſiſted on, and I remember a Story was raiſed about ſome great Dealers in the *Weſt*, who had with-drawn their ſtock, left off all buſineſs, by which means vaſt Numbers of poor People, who did depend on them, were utterly undone: This Matter ſeemed ſo conſiderable, as that ſeveral of the moſt Eminent Perſons in the Nation did meet together to conſult about a remedy for ſo great, and as it was ſaid, ſo growing an evil. But when this Matter came to be enquired into, I could never learn that it had any thing more than a great deal of noiſe in it.

There is an eminent City in this Nation, inferiour perhaps to none except *London*, wherein this Artifice was made uſe of to fright the Magiſtrates from ſuppreſſing the Conventicles: A great rumour was ſpread up and down, that if they might not have Liberty to meet as formerly, then they would all with-draw their Stocks, which would be a great detriment to His Majeſty, and a vaſt loſs to the City, and leave the Poor to be provided for by their reſpective Pariſhes. But the Raiſers of all this Clamour did quickly find that they had to do with thoſe who were at leaſt as great Maſters of Trade as themſelves, and accordingly it was undertaken by thoſe who were very well able to make it good; that if the Diſſenters did think fit to withdraw their Stocks, there ſhould immediate care be taken that the Trade of the City ſhould be carried on to the very ſame height which it was at, without the leaſt abatement, or leaving any one Work-man out of as good an Employment as he had before: It was ſo far from being feared, that

that it was desired that they would withdraw their Stocks, and that they may be the better encouraged to the so doing, provided that they would give Security that they will not Trade at all, neither by themselves, or others for them, nor in other mens Names, they shall at any time have a good sum of money given them, if that may move them to it.

Let us not be vainly afraid, where no fear is: Do we know the Non-Conformists no better than so, that we should suspect them of being apt to give over their profitable Trades? It had been a more rational Jealousie to have looked upon them as more intent upon any imaginable way of getting of Money, than on any Settlement of Religion, of what sort soever: And perhaps it would be not only no ill Experiment to destroy this Argument, but withall as likely a way to reduce them, as any which can be thought upon; if there were a Law, That those who refuse to conform, or at least who meet at Conventicles, should not be permitted to Trade:

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Such a Law indeed would be terrible to them, and I hope the bare mention of it will make them forbear to uſe this kind of threatning us with that, which to themſelves alone will be, if at all, dreadful.

As to the third Objection, That Merchants beyond Seas (as *Roman* Catholicks, *&c.*) will be afraid to truſt their Eſtates in the hands of thoſe who are not of their own Religion, *&c.* It is of ſo little weight as to require but a very few words; it being evident that all kinds of Merchants at this day do correſpond, and alwayes have correſponded with others not of their own Religion, Papiſts with Proteſtants, Proteſtants with Papiſts, *&c.* What other Pretences there are in this Caſe, wherein Trade may ſeem concerned, I do not at preſent call to mind, and therefore ſhall go on to the next ſuggeſtion why a Toleration of ſeveral wayes of Religion may not do as well here as it doth amongſt our Neighbours in *France* and *Holland*.

As to *France*, the different Profeſſi-

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ons of Religion there, hath not been without many ſad effects upon both Parties, and hath ſo ſanctified the Animoſities on each ſide, that it hath prevailed upon both, out of Zeal to God, to let Aliens and Enemies into the Bowels of their Native Country. But their Caſe and ours is vaſtly different; the *Hugonots*, who are there tolerated, have thoſe Merits to plead which our Non Conformiſts have not; and beſides, they do not divide into ſeveral Communions among themſelves, neither would any ſuch thing be permitted either by the Government, or by the Reformed Church it ſelf.

As to *Holland*, Liberty of Conſcience is a thing which they were not brought to admit of by ſecond Thoughts, and after mature Deliberation, but were neceſſitated upon by the Nature of that Cauſe upon which they firſt united among themſelves, and the Conſtitution of that Government they fell into. One part of their Cauſe was a Deliverance from the Impoſitions of the Church of *Rome*,

Rome, as exerciſed after the imperious manner of the Spaniſh Government: Now Liberty in matters of Conſcience was the moſt natural Word in the World in this Caſe to be made uſe of; Freedom from the preſent Preſſures was the thing immediately in their Eye, and many of their Neighbours at the ſame time had the ſame Aim: And as they were then only agreed what they would not have, but not at all what they would have, they invited all, that all might come to their Aſſiſtance. But beſides this, one Religion was not eaſie to be brought into ſo many ſeveral Independent Governments, as go to the making up of thoſe States. For as Sr. *William Temple* tells us, *Chap.* 2. of their Government, *p.* 75, *They are not a Common-wealth, but a Confederacy of ſeven Soveraign Provinces united together for their common and mutual Defence, without any dependance one upon another*, &c. Nay farther, *That each of theſe Provinces is likewiſe compoſed of ſo many little States and Cities, which have ſeveral Marks of Sovereign-*

Sovereignty within themſelves, & are not ſubject to the Sovereignty of the Provinces; not being concluded in many things by the Majority, but only by the univerſal Concurrence of Voyces in the Provincial States. To this let us add the great Variety of Perſons which by reaſon of the Wars and Perſecutions of thoſe times, came into, and embodied with them, out of *France*, *Germany*, *England*; and is it to be wondred at, if not knowing how to agree in any one way they permitted divers?

Such a kind of Liberty therefore as is now contended for amongſt us, cannot ſo properly be ſaid to be given by theſe States, as to have grown up with them; and though it be a part of their Nature, is one of their Inconveniencies; and this hath not been unperceived by them. In the Affair of *Barnevelt* it was found that Religious Differences could find a way of intermingling themſelves with State-quarrels, and the States did then think fit to make Laws about what they called erroneous in point of Doctrine. As to Religion the Effects of Liberty

of

of Conſcience are in thoſe Countries plainly to be ſeen in the daily growth of Popery and Socinianiſm, and of men altogether indifferent, as to all kinds of Articles of Belief; things which by the ſame means may be brought into *England*, and indeed upon the admittance of which, are not to be kept out of it. The States of the United Provinces may indeed keep themſelves ſafe from all Diſturbances which may ariſe from Enthuſiaſtick Lunacies, by reaſon of their Garriſons and ſtanding Army, without which no ſecurity can be had againſt the dangers of Toleration. And ſeing that the Caſe of *England* is in both theſe Reſpects very different from that of *Holland*, & it is to be hoped is intended ſo to continue, an Argument of this nature taken from them ought by no means to be looked upon as what ought to conclude us by it.

Now that the Argument from *Holland* ought by no means to be looked upon as concluſive to us, either as to Comprehenſion or as to Toleration, doth appear in theſe Two things:

1. In

1. In the Conſtitution of our Government, as being very different from theirs; 2. in the Condition of thoſe People amongſt us who diſſent from the Government. 1. As to the Conſtitution of our Government, Comprehenſion is with us much more unſafe than the ſame thing would be in *Holland*; becauſe the Preachers do there depend altogether upon the States Pay, and have no other Tenure but during pleaſure; whereas a Beneficed Man with us hath a Free-hold, and is not to be turned out but by a legal Way: By which advantage he may fence with Authority, and may publickly deliver ſuch things which the people may very well underſtand, and yet the Law may not be able to take any hold of him. And of this, I doubt, we ſhould have ſudden experience, if theſe men could be admitted by Law into ſure and certain Poſſeſſions upon their own Terms; and I am the more apt to ſuſpect this, becauſe I could never yet hear that this ſort of men was ever wrought upon by being yielded to: And if their Gra-

Gratitude and good Nature ſhould upon this occaſion begin, it will be ſo much the more welcome as it is leſs expected.

But as Comprehenſion among us, conſidering the Perſons who do deſire it, and their declared Principles, is much more unſafe than the ſame thing would be in *Holland*, by reaſon of the Conſtitution of our Government in reference to the Clergy; So likewiſe for the ſame reaſon is Toleration more unſafe here than it would be there, if we do conſider the Temper of thoſe People who diſſent from us. *Holland*, as I have already mentioned, hath a ſtanding Army, and ſo conſiderable a one, that the Publick Peace ſhall infallibly be ſecured by it, whether their Preachers, or whoever elſe can be perſwaded by them, will or no. And how confidently ſoever the Argument from *Holland* is now adays made uſe of, to induce us to grant the like Liberty, there was a time when this very Argument was looked upon with great ſcorn: The Author of *Wholſome Severity*, *&c.*

doth

doth cenſure the States of the United Provinces with great ſharpneſs upon this occaſion, *p.* 30. and compares the Toleration there given to differing ſorts of Diſſenters, to the Toleration given by the Pope *to Courtizans.*

And beſides, the various ſorts of Perſwaſions there do not uſe to queſtion the Lawfulneſs of Tolerating one another, as ours have always done. I have already ſhewed, that the Preſbyterians would by no means tolerate the Independents, if they knew how to help it; and I ſhall now in a word ſhew, how unwilling the Independents are to tolerate the Preſbyterians, or other Sects which in their Inclinations they do not favour.

And this is no new diſcovery of mine, but a thing which did diſcover it ſelf as early as there was occaſion for it, as we read in the forementioned Book called *Wholſome Severity reconciled with Chriſtian Liberty*, p. 19. *In New* England *there hath been Severity enough (to ſay no worſe) uſed*

againſt Hereticks and Schiſmaticks. And here I muſt appeal to the Conſciences of thoſe who now plead ſo much for Liberty of Conſcience and Toleration in this Kingdom; were they able to root out the Presbyterians and their way, and could find Civil Authority inclinable to put forth the Coercive Power againſt it, Whether in that caſe would they not ſay, That the Magiſtrate may repreſs it by ſtrong hand, if it be not otherwiſe to be repreſſed? It is not without Cauſe that I put this Quære *to them; for* M. S. *p.* 50. *doth allow of the Magiſtrates fighting againſt a Doctrine which is indeed Superſtition, Hereſie or Schiſm, and only pretendeth to be from God, when it is indeed from men. Alſo that Pamphlet called,* As you were, *p.* 3. *tells us, that it was neither* Gamaliel's *meaning, nor Mr. Goodwins, That every Way pretending to be from God muſt be let alone; but that only we are to refrain and let it alone till we are out of danger of fighting againſt God, while we endeavour to overthrow it. Now I aſſume that there are ſome who plead for Liberty of Conſcience,*

ſcience, who profeſs that they are certain, and fully aſſured upon demonſtrative proofs, that the Presbyterial Way is not from God nor according to the Mind of Jeſus Chriſt : Therefore according to their Principles, they muſt allow of the putting forth of the Civil Coercive Power againſt the Presbyterial Way, &c.

Mr. *Sterry* likewiſe, who was the great Preacher at *Whitehall* in the dayes of Mr. *Oliver Cromwel*, in a Sermon preached, *Nov.* 5. 1651. called England's *Deliverance from the Northern Presbytery, compared with its Deliverance from the Roman Papacy*, upon *Jer.* 16. 14,15. *It ſhall no more be ſaid, The Lord liveth that brought up the Children of Iſrael out of the Land of Egypt; But the Lord liveth that brought up the Children of Iſrael out of the Land of the North, &c.* Which Sermon was Printed by Order of thoſe Gentlemen who pleaſed to call themſelves a Parliament, gives us ſuch an account of the Preſbyterians, as was very grateful to the Powers then in being (though it was to the Preſbyterians that they

owed their very Being;) I ſhall lay down his very words: In his Epiſtle he ſaith thus; *Right honorable, I have deſired in my Preaching, in my Prayers, to work with God even for the opening of the eyes of men, to ſee that the ſame Spirit which lay in the polluted Bed of Papacy may meet them in the perfumed Bed of Presbytery, &c. To which purpoſe I have in my Sermon repreſented the ſame Spirit which dwells in the Papacy, when it enters into the PURER FORM OF PRESBYTERY, as FULLER OF MYSTERY, ſo FULLER OF DESPITE AND DANGER, &c.* In the Sermon it ſelf; *Many daughters have done vertuouſly, but thou excelleſt them all: So may* England *now ſay to the Lord, In many Mercies, as eſpecially that in ſaving us from this bloody deſign of the Egyptian Papacy, thou haſt done graciouſly and wonderfully; but this laſt Mercy, by which thou ſaveſt us from the black Plots and bloody Powers of the NORTHERN PRESBYTERY hath exceeded them all.* And in that Sermon he doth all along prefer the Papiſts before the Preſbyterians, the Conſequence

ſequence of which doth not amount to Toleration of them: Nay, our Brethren in *New-England*, though their Conſtitution hath as much of Liberty of Conſcience in it, as any Place in the World, yet have found it to be a thing ſo very troubleſom, as that they are grown quite weary of, and have put very ſevere Reſtraints upon it: Of which in the Second Part of the Excellent Friendly Debate, *p.* 227. and the Third Part, *p.* 244. any man may be abundantly ſatisfied; and it is well known that Quakers were hanged in *New-England*, which was a ſeverity they did not meet with, either at *Rome* or at *Conſtantinople.*

Mr. *Edwards* in his Anſwer to the Apologetical Narration, *p.* 244. draweth an Argument againſt Toleration from the Judgment of the Divines in *New England*, who are againſt the Toleration of any Church Government, or way but one. *For the Diſcipline of Jeſus Chriſt (as we have it in Church Government and Church Covenant diſcuſſed (Queſtion* 31.*) is not arbitrary, that one Church may practiſe*

one Form, and another another Form, as each one ſhall pleaſe, but is one and the ſame for all Churches, and in all the Eſſentials and Subſtantials of it unchangeable, and to be kept till the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt: And if that Diſcipline which we here practiſe be (as we are perſwaded of it) the ſame which Chriſt hath appointed, and therefore unalterable, we ſee not how another may be lawful: Upon which account they will not in *New-England* tolerate Brownists, Anabaptiſts, Antinomians, Quakers, and ſo careful they are in this matter, that they make ſuch enquiries into the inward Sentiments of the Minds even of the Laity, as among us are not uſual; and in ſuch Points too wherein the Publick Government is not concerned. Mr. *Cotton* the greateſt Divine in *New-England*, and a precious man, is againſt Toleration, and holds that men may be puniſhed for their Conſciences, as appears by his Letter to Mr. *Williams*, & Mr. *Williams* his Anſwer, both Printed, & his Expoſition on the Vials, *Vial.* 3. *p.* 16, 17. & *Vial.* 4. *p.* 17. Where he Anſwers this Objecti-

on,

on, *Conſcience ſhould not be forced*, and this is his Anſwer; *Why do you think that Heretick's were not as conſcionable in the Old Teſtament as now? If any man had a Conſcience to turn men from God, he would have men of as much Conſcience to cut them off:* So that upon the whole matter it doth appear that this loud demand of Toleration is a very diſingenious, nay a diſhoneſt one; becauſe it is asked by thoſe who (if the Power were in their hands) would neither allow it to thoſe they now ask it of, no nor ſo much as permit it to one another. One Inſtance of their Barbarity in this kind will not be tedious; the Presbyterians denied His late Majeſty the Attendance of His own Chaplains in His own Family, for the Exerciſe of His own Devotion; and as the Presbyterians denied Him the uſe of the Common-Prayer whilſt he was alive, the Independents would not allow Him to be buried by it after he was dead. Let them reflect a little upon their own demeanour in this Caſe, and then be as loud as they pleaſe in crying out

for Moderation, Tenderneſs, Forbearance, Condiſcenſion.

And ſo I go on to the laſt Objection, that Civil Penalties do only make Hypocrites. This were an Excellent Argument againſt all Laws whatſoever if it were well purſued; but on the other ſide I take it to be a very clear Caſe, that Toleration makes Hypocrites; for it renders it ſafe for any man, in order to whatever end, to pretend ſome diſſatisfactions againſt the preſent Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions, when in his own Mind he hath none: And this effect it hath had from the firſt moment of His Majeſties Reſtauration, unto this time: Many Preachers then poſſeſſed of Benefices went away from them, becauſe the Right Owners returned to them again, and yet theſe men pretended Scruples againſt the Common Prayer and Ceremonies, and ſo were looked upon as ſufferers for their Conſcience, and have ever ſince ſubſiſted upon the ſtrength of ſuch pretenſions: Of thoſe who by the Death of the Right Incumbents continued in their ill-got

Poſſeſſions

Poſſeſſions till the Act of Uniformity: How many refuſed to conform more out of ſhame than Conſcience? They could not without bluſhing practiſe thoſe things which they formerly preached againſt, eſpecially in the ſame place where they had done ſo; and accordingly ſome have conformed in other Countries than where they lived before, and more did proffer it, if they could have obtained to have been provided for: And of thoſe who did go out at Saint *Bartholomews* Day, 1662. How many were there who went out upon the great aſſurance which they had from their Agents in *London* of returning again in a few Weeks with Honour? And among the People how many are there who go to Conventicles meerly to get Cuſtom, as finding it to be a ſucceſful way, by becoming Members of ſuch a Church, to get the Trade of ſuch a Party.

I have now conſidered the Inconveniencies of that Fine Project called Liberty of Conſcience, and the various pretences by which of late it hath been

been recommended to us: How much ſoever theſe imperfect Reaſonings of mine may have fallen below the dignity of the Argument, I ſhall be ſo juſt to my Cauſe, as to refer the Reader where he may receive compleat and abundant ſatisfaction, *viz.* to thoſe Excellent Votes of the Honourable Houſe of Commons, *February* 25. 1662. where there is a full State of this Affair drawn up with an equal height of Piety and Wiſdom; the Reaſons full and clear, carrying in them all the Advantages of Strength and Evidence: Thoſe Renowned Gentlemen did then ſhew that they were able with their Pens to give an account of that Cauſe, for which very many of themſelves, and Fathers did honourably draw their Swords, and knew very well how to aſſert that Church by all the Rules of Chriſtian Prudence, as well as they did formerly ſet inimitable Patterns of Chriſtian Courage in ſuffering for it. There we may ſee and admire how thoſe Glorious Worthies came up to the greatneſs of themſelves, and of the Argument; and indeed

deed they were both worthy of one another, they to defend, and that to be defended; and as nothing was ever better penned than thoſe Reaſons, ſo there was ſcarce ever a better Occaſion; the beſt Church in *Europe*, was then bore witneſs to by the beſt Houſe of Commons which ever ſat in this Nation: Thoſe Votes ſhall for ever remain as a laſting Monument as of the Zeal and Religion, ſo of the incomparable Endowments and Abilities of thoſe who drew them up

And now I ſhall preſume to offer a few words to our diſſenting Brethren, that they would ſeriouſly bethink themſelves what the Cauſes of their Separation are, how few, how ſlight; that they would with them compare the Effects of it, what they have been, what they are, what they may come to be: Such things have already been brought about in Church and State (by means of thoſe Diviſions which the ſobereſt among you did begin and foment, and none but they were valuable enough to give Support and Countenance unto) as they themſelves

(we

(we are perſwaded) did not intend, nor would fore-ſee till they found it too late for to prevent them: Alterations are things which the Generality are naturally apt to be very fond of, but it is very ſeldom, and for a very little while, that they are found to anſwer the hopes conceived of them: Indeed if it were once agreed upon what thoſe things were which would give a general ſatisfaction, and put an abſolute end to this long and unhappy Controverſie, ſuch a Propoſal were at leaſt worth a Conſideration: But if there be as great variety of Demands as Perſons, and if it be as earneſtly deſired among great Numbers, that their Neighbours ſhould not be indulged, as that themſelves ſhould, and we have for many years found it by a dear bought Experience, that when men are once gone beyond the Rule, they wander every where, and without end; why ſhould you not at laſt look upon it as adviſeable to return to the Rule again? Eſpecially conſidering, that thoſe of the greateſt Conſideration among you are not againſt the

the having any Rule at all, neither as yet have you been able to agree upon any other.

If it be to be wiſhed that there ſhould be any Church at all, that Church muſt have Articles, and muſt have Canons; there is not the ſmalleſt Society in the World can be kept together in order to the meaneſt end, but there muſt be ſome Rules which all its Members muſt ſubmit unto, and be guided by: If therefore there ought to be kept up among us any ſuch thing as the Aſſembling our ſelves together in order to the Publick Worſhip of Almighty God, then this muſt be done at ſome time, in ſome place, and after ſome manner, in ſome words, and by ſome Perſon appointed to attend upon the doing it: Now if there be nothing of all this left to be determined by humane Wiſdom and Authority, but that this whole Thing with every one of all the Circumſtances of it are already determined in Holy Writ: The Church of *England* would be ſo far from oppoſing any thing of this, that ſhe would gladly

ly conform in all particulars to theſe divine Eſtabliſhments, and would be hugely thankful to any of our diſſenting Brethren, if they will pleaſe to ſhew her whereabouts ſhe may read the Form of publick Worſhip, and withal the preciſe Method of that Order and Decency which ought to be uſed in it: For ſhe hath been hitherto ſo unhappy, as not to know of any but general Directions, which ſhe hath endeavoured with all Faithfulneſs to purſue: But after this Diſcovery ſhe will take care, that her Children ſhall ſerve God in no other way than that of his own immediate appointment, if ſhe can but once learn Directions where to meet with it. But if there be no ſuch way of Worſhip, both for the thing it ſelf and all its Circumſtances, preſcribed by God; then ſo much of it as is not done by God, muſt unavoidably be done by ſuch men whom God hath ſet over us, and who in ſuch Caſes are to be to us inſtead of God.

And let us conſider, that the Ceremonies which are retained are very few,

few, very ancient, and very becoming; and to prevent all jealouſies of the leaſt manner of Superſtition in the retaining them, the Church hath taken care to declare againſt all the Abuſes which they were liable unto in the times of Popery. You value your ſelves upon being Succeſſors to the old Puritans; but do you imagine that they would in the leaſt have allowed many of thoſe things which you have been the Authors of, or at leaſt of which you have been the Inſtruments, and into which we hope you were not brought by any formed Reſolutions of your own, but driven upon by thoſe neceſſities in your affairs which your Zeal had unawares drawn you into? Inſtead therefore of being jealous of any concealed miſchiefs in a few decent Rites and comely Uſages, you are highly concerned to remember what have been the Evils of your own Schiſm, which you know your ſelves to have begun, and we are willing to believe did not ſee to the diſmal end of; and which upon your own Principles you will never

ver be able to provide againſt: The Liberties which you take, have encouraged and defended others in taking ſuch Liberties, as no doubt you have been often ſorry to ſee your ſelves undeniably alledged as Patrons and Examples of. And unleſs you can alledge ſome more neceſſary Cauſes of Separation than you hitherto have been able, you muſt be very partial Judges in your own Caſe, if you do not look upon your ſelves as reſponſible for the Conſequences of all thoſe Separations, which by your Arms and Authority any elſe was enabled to make, firſt with you and after from you. Whatever ſuſpicions you may entertain concerning Conformity, you will never be able to make a Bar ſtrong enough to keep out the dreadful Effects of Non-conformity. If no Settlement is to be complied with, but ſuch a one which each particular Man doth in his own private thoughts take to be the moſt adviſeable in all reſpects as to Matter and Circumſtance, and no longer than it doth appear to be ſo, then

there

there is never like to be any Settlement in the World, at leaſt not of any long Continuance. I ſhall in this Caſe make uſe only of the words of an eminent Non-conformiſt, in a Treatiſe which I have already mentioned, entituled, *Of the Religion of England*, aſſerting, *That the Reformed Chriſtianity ſettled in its Latitude is the ſtability of the Kingdom*, p. 28. *Such is the complicated condition of humane Affairs, That it is exceeding difficult to deviſe a Rule or Model that ſhall provide for all whom Equity will plead for: Therefore the prudent and ſober will acquieſce in any Conſtitution that is in ſome ſort proportionable to the Ends of Government.* And again, *p.* 38. *Nevertheleſs, if, when all is ſaid, ſome diſſatisfaction doth invincibly poſſeſs the Judgment, in that Caſe Chriſtian Humility and Charity as well as Diſcretion adviſeth ſuch Perſons to acquieſce in their private ſecurity and freedom, and not to reach after that Liberty that may unſettle the publick Order, and undermine the common Safety.*

Although it be a great, a ſeaſonable

and a concerning Truth, That it is more glorious to confeſs an Error than to continue in one, yet becauſe it may ſeem a ſevere Truth, I ſhall no more than barely mention it: If in earneſt you are at leaſt weary of diviſions, do all which in you lieth on your part to put an end to them; and this you cannot pretend to have done, till you have complied with the Publick Order as far as you believe you may lawfully, and where you cannot obey you may yet be ſilent. If there be a Ceremony which any one among you believes that he ought not to conform to, doth it thence follow, that he is obliged to make Parties againſt it, and for the ſake of that one to abſtain from all the reſt, and to avoid all thoſe other parts of the Church-Service and Communion, where the Rite which he ſcruples hath no manner of place?

Again, when from the Cauſe you fly into great Commendations of your Party, you ſhould do well to avoid ſuch expreſſions as, inſtead of tending to beſpeak the Favour and Compaſſi-

on of Authority, do rather tend to awake its caution and to raiſe its jealouſie: That which doth but look like a Threatning is by no means fit for an Inferiour to put into his Supplication. Not only the Honour, but the Safety of all Government doth depend upon this, to demurr at leaſt upon the granting of that Requeſt, which he who puts it up doth actually take before he asks, and in the very form of his asking it, doth more than inſinuate the great danger which may be in denying him. And this methinks doth appear to have been an *Indecorum* in your eminent Advocate in *His Diſcourſe of the Religion of England*, p. 23. Sect. 11. *How momentous in the ballance of the Nation thoſe Proteſtants are that diſſent from the preſent Eccleſiaſtical Policy*: Where he tells us of their great number, their great Intereſt, their great Commerce, their many Relations, their great Underſtandings and Diſcretion; and in the cloſe of all he adds, NOR DO THEY WANT THE RATIONAL COURAGE OF ENGLISH MEN

The meaning of which Words are at leaſt very ſuſpicious, as to the King, and as to the Church: Since the late Diſcourſes of their Endeavours after an Union, their former Separations do not only continue, but are managed in the ſame manner as formerly: On their Parts we do not hear of any beginnings toward a Complyance: One man indeed there was who made a Profeſſion of ſomething of this, but what reſerves he had in his mind, whereby to render that Profeſſion of his inſignificant, let his after-Practiſes teach us, and withall give us warning what truſt to repoſe in any general though never ſo fair Promiſes.

And thus I have briefly and plainly laid down ſome of the moſt obvious Exceptions againſt the late much diſcourſed of Projects, Comprehenſion, Toleration, and a third made up of both them: Comprehenſion may indeed proceed from an Exceſs of goodneſs in thoſe who are ready to grant it; but it is not very clear that thoſe who are the moſt likely to deſire it, will be moſt ready to make a good uſe of it:

it: Indeed as to the thing it ſelf, it is kept ſo much in the dark, that it is not, except by ſome very few, if by any, underſtood, who they are who either do deſire or would accept it, or upon what terms it would be either given or taken; and as the nature of this thing is unknown, ſo will the Iſſue be moſt uncertain. As to thoſe two abatements which are uſually mentioned, the taking away of Aſſent and Conſent, and diſpenſing with the Obligation of Renouncing the Covenant; they are things which carry great and apparent dangers in them. He who deſires to be excuſed from giving his Aſſent and Conſent, can hardly be able to give any other account of that his deſire than this: That he doth not believe the Doctrine of the Church, or doth not mean to conform to the orders of it. As to the other Particular, the Diſpenſing with the Renouncing of the Covenant; the very Propoſal is methinks a very bold one, if we conſider what was the occaſion of the Covenant; who were the Authors; the Time in which it was

entred into, the ends in order to which, what are the Contents of it, & how perpetual & indiſpenſible they have all along declared the Obligation of it to be, what Effects it hath had already, & at any time may have upon the King, the Church, the Nation, and in an eſpecial manner, upon the Old Cavaliers. And then as to Toleration, I have ſhewed the Inconveniencies to be innumerable and unavoidable, which it may at any time bring upon either of them; there is no Impoſture which at this door ſtanding alwayes open, may not enter into the Church: No Danger which by a dexterous management of ſuch an unbounded Licence, may not have a very fair & eaſie paſſage made for it into the State. And as for any mixture of theſe two Contrivances, it will be ſo long before the Bounds and Limits can be agreed upon to be ſet between them; ſo many things are to be conſidered of, before theſe two can with any ſatisfaction to either be ſuited to one another, that an Enquiry may I ſuppoſe be ſafely put off until a time of greater Leiſure.

The End.

A Poſtſcript to the Reader.

WHen I had put an End, as I thought to your Trouble (Good Reader) and my own, there came to my hands a new Pamphlet, entituled, *Certain Conſiderations tending to promote Peace and good Will amongſt Proteſtants, very uſeful for the preſent times*: The Deſign of which is to promote the foremen-tioned Comprehenſion, which the Author doth endeavour to put a very good colour upon by laying down ſeveral Propoſitions; the Third of which is this, *That the late Civil Wars in* England *were not begun for the Extirpation of Epiſcopacy and Liturgy, or to ſettle the Presbyterian Government here, but merely for Civil Rights*, as he adds afterwards. Now if this Gentleman only means, that the Grandees of the Party had in their Hearts no manner of zeal for or againſt any Form of Religion, any farther than

as their other Ends and Deſigns were carried on by it, I ſhall readily grant it him; nay, I ſhall ſay this farther, That, beſides Religion, the Civil Rights of the Nation were but plauſible Colours, by which the Leading Men of that Party did ſet off their other Ends; ſuch as Revenge, Humour, Diſcontent, Covetouſneſs and Ambition. And this they were told publickly by one whom they knew to be able to make it good, in the excellent Declaration of *Aug.* 12. 1642. *Themſelves know what Overtures have been made by them, and with what Importunity for Offices and Preferments, what great Services ſhould have been done for us, and what other undertakings were (even to the ſaving the Life of the Earl of* Strafford) *if we would confer ſuch Offices upon them.* But that Religion was the thing which they did make ſhew of, and by which they drew abundance of well-meaning but deluded People to their aſſiſtance, is ſo plain, and known ſo publickly, that it is no little wonder, that any ſhould offer to outface the

Nation

Nation in ſo notorious a Caſe. Did not every Preſs and every Pulpit declare againſt Epiſcopacy, Liturgy and Ceremonies? Did not the Lords and Commons, by their Votes of *March* 12. 1642. reſolve upon the Queſtion, That an Army be forthwith raiſed for the Safety of the Kings Perſon, *&c.* and PRESERVING THE TRUE RELIGION? *&c.* Did they not in *July* followiug put forth a Delaration concerning the miſerable Diſtractions and Grievances this Kingdom now lieth in, by means of JESUITICAL and wicked Couſellours now about his Majeſty? wherein they tell us over and over again of the *Proteſtant Religion*, *a great Change of Religion*; *That they ſhould be for ever earneſt to prevent a Civil War and thoſe miſerable Effects which it muſt needs produce, if they may be avoided without the Alteration of RELIGION*, &c. And in their Reſolutions to live and die with the Earl of *Eſſex*, they tell us, That their Army was raiſed, for the MAINTENANCE of the TRUE PROTESTANT RELIGION. The Plate, Wedding-

Wedding-rings, Thimbles and Bodkins had never been brought in, if it had not been that the Cauſe was ſo often called, the Cauſe of God. Let any man read the Remonſtrances and Declarations of the Two Houſes, and then ſee whether Religion was not one of thoſe things which they all along declared their Zeal for; and accordingly in all the Parliaments Quarters, the poor Surplice, the Organs and the Common Prayer-book were the firſt Objects of all their Fury. But becauſe this preſent Deſign of Comprehenſion is particularly intended to gratifie ſome Clergy-men, let us enquire under what name they recommended the War unto the People: Was it not under the name of Gods Cauſe; the ſetting Chriſt on his Throne; fighting the Lords Battels? There is a Collection of their Sermons Printed, which will not ſuffer any Man to doubt of this; out of which there is enough gathered to this purpoſe in *Evangelium Armatum*. And This Mr. *Baxter* hath in a late Book confeſſed as to himſelf; *When the Wars began*

began, though the Cauſe it ſelf lay in Controverſies between King and Parliament; yet the thoughts that the Church and Godlineſs it ſelf was deeply in danger by Perſecution and Arminianiſm did much more to byaſs me to the Parliaments ſide, than the Civil Intereſt (which at the heart I little regarded.) This Author likewiſe confeſſeth, That whatever was the Cauſe at the firſt, it ſoon became a War for Religion. And Mr. *Love*, a Perſon mentioned by this Author as one of great Merit, in his Sermon at the *Uxbridge*-Treaty complains of the ſo long letting alone the Two Plague-ſores of Epiſcopacy and Common Prayer-Book.

The Seventh Propoſition is this, *That the Parliamentarians in the beginning of our Troubles declared, to abhorr and deteſt all Deſigns of depoſing and murthering his Late Sacred Majeſty.* That they did declare againſt any ſuch thing I readily grant, and, amongſt other Reaſons, for this, laid down by our Author, *That it had been eſſe impoſſible for them to have gained the people as they did.* But that there were

were among the chief Contrivers of the Wars, Thoſe who had a deſign upon the Kings Crown and Life, is a thing whereof there is great Evidence. If it be lawful to fight with a King, why is it not lawful to kill him? Swords and Bullets are Things which are by no means to be uſed againſt that Perſon which we think we ought not to deſtroy: And of the great danger which his Majeſties Perſon was in at the Battel at *Edge-hill*, himſelf hath informed us in a Declaration on that Subject. And in the Remonſtrance of *May* 26. 1642. the Lords and Commons did plainly aſſume to themſelves a Right to depoſe the King, in theſe words; *If we ſhould make the higheſt Precedents of former Parliaments our Patterns, there would be no cauſe to complain of want of Modeſty and Duty in us, when we have not ſo much as ſuffered thoſe things to enter into our thoughts, which all the World knows they put in act.* In which words there is thus much plainly contained, That whatever former Parliaments have done, they take themſelves to have

have a Right to do; Now former Parliaments have been over-awed into the depoſing of Kings: Now that they had their Eyes upon thoſe particular Proceedings of former Parliaments, appears by thoſe Words, *All the World knows what they put in act:* His Majeſty in His Anſwer to that Declaration of theirs, tells us of two Gentlemen who ſaid publickly, unreproved in the Parliament Houſe, one, *That the Happineſs of this Kingdom did not depend upon Him, or upon any of the Royal Branches of that Root*; Another, *That He was not worthy to be King of* England: And as for the Royal Power it was plainly demanded from him in the Nineteen Propoſitions.

The Eighth Conſideration is this, *That the Non-conforming Presbyterians had both their hearts and hands in the Reſtauration of His Majeſty to His Royal Throne, for which Mr.* Love, *and Mr.* Gibbons *loſt their Heads.*

Of all things I ſhould leaſt have expected, that the Advocates for the Preſbyterians ſhould have inſiſted upon their Merits to His Majeſty, or the Royal

Royal Family, for which their beſt Apology is the Act of Oblivion; and if they would have inſiſted, yet however methinks they ſhould of all men not have made Mr. *Love* the Perſon to have inſiſted on: As for that Party of the *Scots*, which he correſponded with; it is no Part of their Wiſdom to remind His Majeſty of the Uſage which he found from them. As to Mr. *Love*, the Learned Author of *Samaritaniſm* hath informed us, *p.* 152. That at the Execution of Archbiſhop *Laud*, he uttered theſe Words with great Triumph, *Art thou come Little Will? I am glad to ſee thee here, and hope to ſee the reſt of the Biſhops here e're long*; and having dipped his Handkerchief in his blood, he rode with it to *Uxbridge*, and uſed theſe Words; *Here is the Blood of that Proud Prelate, I hope for more of their Bloods e're long.* And this doth againſt my will lead me to the conſideration of his Sermon at *Uxbridge*, at the time of the Treaty. Amongſt many Scandals caſt upon the King, he herein compares Him to *Charles* the Ninth of *France*, who after

after a Treaty of Peace made the Maſſacre, and to *Antiochus*, of whom we read, *Dan.* 11. 23. *That through his Policy he ſhall cauſe Craft to proſper in his hand, and by Peace ſhall deſtroy many*, and, *after the League made with him he ſhall work deceitfully*: After theſe great Complements toward the King, he tells us in his Preface; *'Tis the Sword, not Diſputes or Treaties which muſt end this Controverſie, wherefore turn your Plowſhares into Swords, and your Pruning-hooks into Spears to fight the Lords's Battles, to avenge the Blood of the Saints which hath been ſpilt, it muſt be avenged either by us, or upon us: Let me but quote the Words of the Prophet* Jeremiah, Chap. 48. verſ. 10. *Curſed be he that doth the Work of the Lord negligently: Curſed be he that keepeth his Sword from Blood, &c.* And I will be bold to ſay this, that the moſt malicious ſuggeſtions which are inſiſted upon in the Votes of Non-Addreſs are to be met with in one Page of that Sermon, *p.* 32. We read *'Twas the Lord who troubled* Achan, *becauſe he troubled* Iſrael. *O that*

in

in this our State-Physicians would resemble God, to cut off those from the Land who have distempered it. Melius est ut pereat Unus quam Unitas.

He tells us, *pag.* 36, 37. of three sorts of Persons, with whom Peace is not to be made: First, Truce-breakers: *O what deceitful Work hath our Parliament met with on the very nick of Treaties for Peace, &c. Secondly, Idolaters are not meet Persons to have a Peace with,* Jehoshaphat *was checked for having an Affinity with* Ahab *an Idolatrous King, because he loved him that hated the Lord, therefore wrath was upon him from the Lord: But* Asa *was commended because he removed* Maachah *from being Queen, because she was an Idolatress: I may say, what* Jehu *said to* Joram, *What Peace can there be so long as the Whoredoms of* Jezebel *THE QUEEN are so many, we may make Peace with Papists now, but who will give us assurance that they will keep their Covenants: Thirdly, men wholly under the guilt of much Innocent blood are not meet Persons to be at peace with, till all the guilt of blood be expiated*

and

and avenged, either by the Sword of the Law, or the Law of the Sword, else a Peace can neither be safe nor just, and pag. 42. *Are Peace and Truth the Ingredients which must heal us? O then dote not too much upon this Treaty of Peace, which is this day beginning*: And again, *Will the Blood-thirsty Rebels of* Ireland, *the Idolatrous Papists of* England, *the Pompous Prelats, the rest of the corrupt Clergy, and the profaner sort of the Nation, who joyn hand in hand together: Are these likely to be Patrons of Truth? Deceive not your selves, there is little likelihood of Peace with such: What I said before, I say again, Either they must grow better, or we must wax worse, before we can agree.*

I should willingly have suffered these Things to sleep, but that our Author forced me upon it, by insisting upon the Merits of Mr. *Love*, and Mr. *Love* himself in his Speech upon the Scaffold justifies himself as to all that he had done in relation to the Publick Differences; *I bless my God, I am free from the Blood of all men*, &c. *I do declare that I dy with my Judgment*

ſet againſt Malignity, I do have both name and thing, I ſtill retain AS FE-HEMENT A DETESTATION of Malignant Intereſt AS EVER I DID: And again, *I dy cleaving to all thoſe Oaths, Vows, Covenants, Proteſtations, that were impoſed by the Two Houſes of Parliament, as owning them, and in dying with my Judgment for them. To the Proteſtation, the Vow and Covenant, the Solemn League and Covenant.*

This Author cannot deſerve any way ſo well of the Party he pleads for, as not to give us occaſion to enquire into paſt Matters: For whatever Inconveniencies may be expected from Comprehenſion or Toleration, by the nature of the things themſelves, they will be found to be very much aſcertained and increaſed, if we conſider the Perſons who do deſire either of them: I ſuppoſe we ſhall hear no more of the Merits of *Love*, and if this Gentleman doth think fit to change him for any other Inſtance: I ſhall adviſe that he would pitch upon ſuch a Perſon as hath wrote nothing, nor been in any Publick Employment,

ployment, leſt otherwiſe he ſhould force us upon thoſe Enquiries which will be, it is to be doubted little for the credit of him whoſe name is brought in Queſtion, and which I ſhall take very little delight in.

The End.

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The End.